Presbyterian Rule and Form . . . of Government.

PRESBYTERIAN RULE,

EMBRACING

THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT,
RULES OF DISCIPLINE, AND
DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP,

IN

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE UNITED STATES,

RE-ARRANGED AND ANNOTATED, WITH THE DECISIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF SAID CHURCH, AND WITH THE DECISIONS OF

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, FROM 1797 TO 1897, SO FAR AS THEY SEEM TO BE APPLICABLE, AND WITH REMARKS BY THE COMPILER,

REV. W. H. WORKMAN.

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PREFACE.

VERY few of our members have any practical knowledge of the government of our church, and this likewise may be said of many of the ruling elders, who have equal authority in the governing of the church with ministers of the gospel.

This lack of knowledge on the part of the members and ruling elders arises from the fact that the sources which supply this information are inaccessible to them, and hence the need of a handy book of ready reference at such a price as shall be within the reach of all.

The necessary equipment for the office of ruling elder consists of Moore's *Digest of the General Assemblies from* 1817 *to* 1886, Alexander's *Digest of the Southern Assembly*, the *Minutes* of the Assemblies from 1887 to present time, the old and the new Books of Church

Order and Discipline. The possession of these requires a larger sum than many can afford, and more study than many are willing to give. Little has been done to furnish the elder with a sufficiently practical and economical equipment for his work—the important work of ruling the house of God. In the absence of these, he has been forced to follow the leading of his minister, at the sacrifice of much of his independence.

This little work is an effort to furnish a compendium of the material above mentioned, so far as it bears upon the practical government of the church.

The text of the book is an exact copy of the *Book of Church Order* and *Directory for Worship*. In a few cases, portions of one paragraph of the *Book of Church Order* are combined with portions of other paragraphs, where they seem to be logically connected. In such cases, where there has been made a slight change in the phraseology, so as to connect the sentences, it is indicated by a foot-note.

The writer has endeavored to arrange herein the Form of Government in a more natural, historical and logical manner than is found in the *Book of Church Order*.

It is the hope of the author that this little work will prove acceptable to the officers of Sabbath-schools and to seminary students in the study of the government of the church, and also to the private members of the church.

May the Lord's blessing attend it.

W. H. WORKMAN.

ABBREVIATIONS.

When figures stand alone, they indicate the Minutes of the Assembly for that year. If it be the Northern Assembly, the word "North" is added. If "R. C." be added, it indicates the decision was made under review and control. "J." indicates it was a judicial case.

N. S.—New School.

O. S.—Old School.

F. G.—Form of Government.

C. F.—Confession of Faith.

L. C.—Larger Catechism.

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PART I.

OF THE PARTICULAR CHURCH, ITS GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE.

PRESBYTERIAN RULE.

OF THE PARTICULAR CHURCH, ITS GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE.

OF THE CHURCH, ITS KING AND HEAD.

Jesus Christ, upon whose shoulders the government is, whose name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end; who sits upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice, henceforth, even forever; having all power given unto him in heaven and in earth by him who raised him from the dead, and set him on his own right hand, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things, to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all; he being ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things, received gifts for his church, and gave all officers necessary for the edification of the church and the perfecting of his saints. (F. G. 8.)

Jesus, the Mediator, the sole Priest, Prophet, King, Saviour and Head of the church, contains in himself, by way of eminency, all the offices in his church, and has many of their names attributed to him in the Scriptures. He is Apostle, Teacher, Pastor, Minister, and Bishop, and the only Lawgiver in Zion. It belongs to his Majesty from his throne of glory to rule and teach the church, through his word and Spirit, by the ministry of men; thus mediately exercising his own authority and enforcing his own laws, unto the edification and establishment of his kingdom. (F. G. 9.)

Under the New Testament, our Lord at first collected his people out of different nations, and united them to the household of faith, by the mission of extraordinary officers endued by miraculous gifts, which have long since ceased. (F. G. 32.)

OF THE CHURCH.

1. *The Catholic Church.*—The Catholic, or Universal Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect which have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ, the head thereof. (C. F. xxv.) It has been sometimes more, sometimes less, visible. (C. F. xxv. 5.) This visible church, which is also Catholic or Universal under the gospel (not confined to one nation as before under the law), consists of all those throughout the world who profess the true religion, and of submission to his laws, together with their children. (C. F.

xxv. 1, and F. G. 3.) It is one and the same before the law, under the law, and under the gospel. (F. G. 12.)

2. *The Church a Kingdom.*—The church which the Lord Jesus Christ has erected in this world for the gathering and perfecting of the saints is his visible kingdom of grace, and is one and the same in all ages. (F. G. 2.) The church, with its ordinances, officers, and courts, is the agency which Christ has ordained for the edification and government of his people, for the propagation of the faith and the evangelization of the world (F. G. 18) unto the end of the world. (C. F. xxv. 3.) And doth by his presence and spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto. (C. F. xxv.) Since the ascension of Christ to heaven, he is present with the church by his word and Spirit, and the benefits of all his offices are effectually applied by the Holy Ghost. (F. G. 11.)

3. *Necessity Of.*—It is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation. (C. F. xxv. p. 2.)

4. *Unity in Division.*—This visible unity of the body of Christ, though obscured, is not destroyed by its division into different denominations of professing Christians, but all those which maintain the word and sacraments in their fundamental integrity are to be recognized as true branches of the church of Jesus Christ. (F. G. 13.)

The particular churches which are members thereof are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the gospel is taught and embraced, the ordinances administered, and public worship performed, more or less purely in them. The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error, and some have so far degenerated as to become no churches at all, but synagogues of Satan, yet there shall always be a church on earth to worship God according to his will. (C. F. xxv. 5.)

5. *What Churches are not to be Recognized as Such.*—The following churches are not to be recognized as true churches: The Roman Catholic Church (C. F. xxv. 6, 1790, 1835, 1845); the Unitarian (1814); the Campbellite, or Christian Church, 1864, O. S.

6. *Inter-Communion.*—Saints by profession are bound to maintain a holy communion and fellowship in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification, as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities, which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (C. F. xxvi. p. 2.)

7. *Validity of the Sacraments—Tests of a True Church.*—In other societies, as the Unitarian, their rites may have due regularity of outward form and yet be no valid baptism, be-

cause they are not true parts of Christ's visible church. . . .

"In view of the fact that several churches hold grave errors in connection with much saving truth, and perhaps no church receives in everything the exact mind of the Spirit, it may be asked with what degree of strictness or liberality this mark of a true visible church is to be applied. It seems to us consonant to the Scriptures and the judgment of charity to answer that, so long as any communion so retains the essential truths of God's word and the aids of the Holy Ghost as to save souls by its ministrations, it shall be held a true, though imperfect, member of his visible body, though it may omit or impugn some principles which we have received from God, and may even deny to our ordinances all recognition, and to our communion all church character; yet we may not imitate its uncharitableness. So long as Christ visibly entrusts it with his saving word and Spirit, we are bound to recognize it as of his visible body, notwithstanding its errors, and to pray for its attainment of a more peaceable unity in the bonds of the truth." (1871.)

. . . . . .

8. *Campbellite Church—Nothing Given to Determine Its Orthodoxy By.*—When we examine the numerous societies founded by Alexander Campbell and his coadjutors, we find that their distinctive principles are a rejection of all use whatsoever of creeds or symbols of faith of human composition as antiscriptural and in-

fringing liberty of conscience and Christian unity. (If your committee may believe the current testimony, within and without, these societies, while some who are admitted to them hold more, many hold less of God's saving truth than is embraced in the above erroneous and fragmentary doctrine. Such must be the result of their rejection of all symbols of belief.) If this first principle be consistently carried out, any one who is willing to attest in immersion a profession of his faith in Jesus Christ as God's Son, and his Saviour, must be admitted to communion, and may be admitted to the ministry, whatever may be the sense in which he construes the terms "faith," "Messiah," "Sonship to God," and "salvation," although that construction may be Sabellian, Arian, Pelagian or Socinian. To this must be added the fact that these societies admit no theory of church government save the independent, and no superior church courts of review and control. Whatever, then, may be the excellencies of one member or of one congregation in this denomination, the Christian world has no evidence or guarantee that the next is not of a far different character. In such circumstances, even if the Assembly admitted that the system above delineated contains sufficient substance of saving truth to redeem the soul embracing it this difficulty would remain. This communion refuses us all guarantee that the person baptized into its pale held at that time even that fragmentary outline. We are persistently left in the dark whether

both he and the minister that baptized him and the congregation which received him may not have apprehended the Trinity, whose name was used, the faith professed, and the salvation embraced, in the sense of the unbelieving, Pelagian or Socinian, unless we happen to have the incidental evidence of a personal acquaintance with these several parties. In these circumstances there appears no way for the church to protect the testimony and sacraments of her divine head from disparagement (a sacred duty in the performance of which no option is left us) except to refuse to recognize in that body as a whole a part of Christ's true visible church. Believing that it embraces many individuals and some congregations who are true saints of God, we sincerely regret for the sake of these the necessity of assuming this ground. But it is a necessity which they create in refusing to separate themselves by a definite testimony from those who teach another gospel, for our sovereign Lord has strictly forbidden us to bid God-speed to such. 1871. (But see Art. 158.)

CHURCH POWER IN GENERAL.

9. *The whole polity of the church* consists in doctrine, government, and distribution. (F. G. 33.)

Christ is the King and Head of his church, and as such has given to his church, officers, oracles and ordinances; especially has he ordained therein his system of doctrine, government, discipline and worship, all of which are either

expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced therefrom; to which things he commands that nothing be added and from them nought be taken away. (F. G. 10.)

10. *And the ordinary and perpetual officers in the church*, by whom all its powers are administered, are, (1), Ministers of the word or teaching elders, who are commissioned to preach the gospel, administer the sacraments, and also to rule; (2), Ruling elders, whose office is to wait on government; (3), Deacons, whose function is the distribution of the offerings of the faithful for pious uses. (F. G. 33.)

No one who holds office in the church ought to usurp authority therein, or to receive any official titles of spiritual pre-eminence, except such as are employed in the Scriptures. (F. G. 34.)

11. *Ecclesiastical power, which is wholly spiritual*, is twofold: the officers exercise it sometimes severally, as in preaching the gospel, administering the sacraments, reproving the erring, visiting the sick, and comforting the afflicted, which is the power of order; and they exercise it sometimes jointly in church courts, after the form of judgment, which is the power of jurisdiction. (F. G. 16.) The exercise of ecclesiastical power, whether joint or several, has the divine sanction when in conformity with the statutes enacted by Christ, the lawgiver, and when put forth by courts or by officers thereunto appointed in his word. (F. G.

19.) Ecclesiastical jurisdiction is not a joint but a several power, to be exercised by presbyters in courts. (F. G. 5.) These courts are Church Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies. The church is governed by these various courts in regular gradations; but they are all nevertheless Presbyteries, as being composed exclusively of presbyters. (F. G. 52, 53.) These courts may have jurisdiction over one or many churches, but they sustain such mutual relation as to realize the idea of the unity of the church. (F. G. 5.) Every act of jurisdiction is the act of the whole church, performed by it through the appropriate organ. (F. G. 62.)

[*Remark.*—This unity is secured by appeal, complaint, review, and control, which see.]

12. *These assemblies are altogether distinct from the civil magistracy,* nor have they any jurisdiction in political or civil affairs. They have no power to inflict temporal pains and penalties, but their authority is in all respects moral or spiritual. (F. G 59.) The sole functions of the church, as a kingdom distinct from the civil commonwealth, are to proclaim, administer, and to enforce the law of Christ revealed in the Scriptures. (F. G. 17.) The jurisdiction of church courts is only ministerial and declarative, and relates only to the doctrines and precepts of Christ, to the order of the church, and to the exercise of discipline. *First,* They can make no laws binding the conscience, but may frame symbols of faith, bear testi-

mony against error in doctrine and immorality in practice, within or without the pale of the church, and decide cases of conscience. *Secondly*, They have power to establish rules for the government and discipline, worship and extension of the church, which must be agreeable to the doctrines relating thereto contained only in Scripture; the circumstantial details of these matters being left to the Christian prudence and wisdom of church officers and courts. *Thirdly*, They possess the right of requiring obedience to the laws of Christ; hence they admit those qualified to sealing ordinances and to their respective offices, and they exclude the disobedient and disorderly from their offices or from sacramental privileges. But the highest censure to which their authority extends is to cut off the contumacious and impenitent from the congregation of believers Moreover, they possess all administrative authority necessary to give effect to these powers. (F. G. 60.)

All church courts are one in nature, constituted of the same elements, possessed inherently of the same kinds of rights, powers, and differing only as the constitution may provide. Yet it is according to the scriptural example, and needful to the purity and harmony of the whole church, that disputed matters of doctrine and order arising in the lower courts should be referred to the higher courts for decision. (F. G. 61.)

For the orderly and efficient dispatch of ecclesiastical business it is necessary that the sphere

of action of each court be distinctly defined. The Session exercises jurisdiction over a single church; the Presbytery over what is common to the ministers, sessions and churches within a prescribed district; the Synod over what belongs in common to three or more Presbyteries and their ministers, sessions and churches; and the General Assembly over such matters as concern the whole church. And the jurisdiction of these courts is limited by the express provisions of the constitution.

Every court has the right to resolve questions of doctrine and discipline seriously and reasonably proposed, and in general to maintain truth and righteousness, condemning erroneous opinions and practices which tend to the injury of the peace, purity or progress of the church; and although each court exercises exclusive original jurisdiction over all matters specially belonging to it, the lower courts are subject to the review and control of the higher courts in regular gradation; hence these courts are not separate and independent tribunals, but they have a mutual relation, and every act of jurisdiction is the act of the whole church, performed by it through its appropriate organ. (F. G. 62.)

OF THE PARTICULAR CHURCH, ITS ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT.

13. *It is according to scriptural example* that the church should be divided into many particular churches. (F. G. 14.)

14. *A particular church* consists of a number of professing Christians, with their offspring, associated together for divine worship and godly living, agreeably to the Scriptures, and submitting to the lawful government of Christ's kingdom. (F. G. 20.) Its officers are: the pastor, ruling elders and deacons.

15. *In the organization of a church* the first step shall be to receive testimonials in behalf of such of the applicants as are members of the church, if there be any, and then to admit, upon a profession of faith in Christ, such candidates as on an examination may be found qualified. (F. G. 26.)

[*Remark.*—Really, the first step is for existing members of the church to make application to Presbytery for the formation of a church at a given place. This being granted by the Presbytery, it thereupon appoints a commission to convene at the place or vicinity to organize said church, if the way be clear; or the Presbytery is convened itself in the vicinity or place. This commission, duly authorized, receives the testimonials of the applicants, passes upon the qualifications of candidates for church membership, and receives them.]

If there are any of them unbaptized, they should at this stage be baptized, else they cannot vote in the ensuing election. (North, 1882; C. F. xxviii. 9.)

16. *By an Evangelist.*—A church may be organized if in a frontier district or destitute

part of the church. But this is rarely done. (See Art. 355.)

An evangelist shall not organize a church in the bounds of a Presbytery unless authority has been previously obtained. (North, 1883.)

17. *Organized.—Those persons are then by the commission (or evangelist)* required to enter into a covenant, by answering affirmatively the following questions with uplifted hands, viz.: "Do you, in reliance upon God for strength, solemnly promise and covenant that you will walk together as an organized church on the principles of the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church, and that you will study the purity and harmony of the whole body?" The presiding minister shall then say: "I now pronounce and declare you are constituted a church according to the word of God and the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." (F. G. 27.)

[*Remark.*—How can he so declare when there is as yet no presbyter or other officer in that church? It seems that this declaration ought not to be made, however, until officers are elected and installed, for the existence of an eldership is essential to the existence of a Presbyterian church.] (1833.)

18. *Ruling elders and deacons* are then to be elected, ordained, and installed. (F. G. 28.) See Art. 10.

19. *When there is no Election Practicable.*—If suitable men for the eldership cannot be obtained (at least one), all the facts should be reported to the Presbytery, which should regard the organization as potentially a church, and therefore entitled to enrollment and supervision, but as imperfect in its condition, being disqualified, lacking proper officers, from exercising government and discipline, and from representation in the judicatories of the church. The Presbytery should therefore appoint a special committee to take the oversight of the church, and to secure, as soon as possible, the election of proper officers, ruling elders and deacons, that it may perform all the functions of a Presbyterian church. (North, 1890.)

20. *Ordinary vocation to office in the church* is the calling of God by the Spirit, through the inward testimony of a good conscience, the manifest approbation of God's people, and the concurring judgment of the lawful court of Christ's house according to his word. (F. G. 96.) See Art. 308 and 31, 316.

21. *The power which Christ has committed* to his church vests in the whole body—the rulers and the ruled constituting it a spiritual commonwealth. This power, as exercised by the people, extends to the choice of those officers whom he has appointed in his church. (F. G. 15.)

Since the government of the church is representative, the right of the election of officers by God's people, either immediately by their own

suffrages, or mediately through church courts composed of their chosen representatives, is indefeasible. Nor can any man be placed over a church, in any office, without the election, or at least the consent of that church. (F. G. 97.)

22. *All communicants that are in good and regular standing*, but no others, are entitled to vote in the election of officers in the churches to which they are attached; and when a majority of the electors cast their votes for a person for either of these offices (ruling elder, deacon and pastor), he shall be considered elected. (F. G. 105.)

[*Remark.*—Those who are under church censures are of course not in such standing.]

The censure of admonition terminates upon administration (J. 1881), hence does not disqualify.

The unbaptized are disqualified. (See C. F. xviii. 9.)

There is no distinction as to age of voter (1835, 1867).

Members whose names are upon separate roll (Art. 174) cannot vote until Session restores the name to roll of communicants. (O. S. 1865.)

23. *It is important that in all these elections* a minister should preside; but if the Session find it impracticable, without hurtful delay, to procure the attendance of a minister, the election may nevertheless be held. (F. G. 103.)

24. *In the organization of a church* the presiding minister is appointed by Presbytery,

or the evangelist, as the case may be, presides.

[*Remark.*—After the officers have been installed, the communicants should select, by vote, a name for the church, and it should be reported to Presbytery; whereupon the church should be enrolled, and is entitled to representation.]

ELECTION IN CHURCH PREVIOUSLY ORGANIZED.

25. *Every church shall elect persons* to the office of pastor, ruling elder and deacon, in the following manner: Public notice shall previously be given by the Session that the church is to convene at the usual place of public worship for such purpose; and it shall always be the duty of the Session to convene them, when requested by a majority of the persons entitled to vote. (F. G. 102.)

26. *If the Session refuse or neglect* to do so, the aggrieved party should complain to the Presbytery. (1822.)

If the election is held without the order of Session or higher court, although previous notice be given, it is irregular, but does not render the ordination and installation invalid thereunder. (1856 and 67 C.)

27. *The voters being convened, the Moderator* shall put the question to them: "Are you ready to proceed with the election?" If they declare themselves ready, the Moderator shall call for nominations, after which the election shall immediately proceed, unless the electors prefer to

postpone it to a subsequent day; or the election may proceed by ballot, without nominations. (F. G. 104.)

[*Remark.*—The O. S. Assembly, in 1847, decided that the Session might nominate; but as this was under the old book, which provided that the election should be in the mode most approved and in use in that congregation, this does not apply to the present book.]

28. *But in every case* a majority of all the voters present shall be required to elect. (F. G. 104)

It is the duty of members not to shrink from the acceptance of the office because of its difficulties; and when men of influence and intelligence do so, they are deserving of censure by the Session. For a fuller statement, see Pastoral Letter, 1839.

29. *Those who fill this office* ought to be blameless in life and sound in the faith; they should be men of wisdom and discretion, and, by the holiness of their walk and conversation, should be examples to the flock. (F. G. 44.)

[*Remark.*—In the old book they were required to be male members in the particular church electing them in full communion. (F. G., ch. xiii, sec. 2.)]

The candidate must be a member in good standing, not under any censure; must accept the doctrines of the church, by which his soundness in the faith is tested; must accept the teaching of the church as to infant baptism. (M. A. 1882, North.)

An unemployed minister is not eligible, because he cannot hold two offices at the same time. (1866, 1869, 1874, North.) Also, a ruling elder of another church, so long as he retains such relation. (*Ibid.*)

30. *The Assembly declined to recommend* a change in the Form of Government so as to require elders elect to be examined, saying this would be shifting the responsibility from the conscience of the candidate, where it properly belonged. (1883.)

Elect elders and deacons may not be examined by Session, but Assembly directs the ministers and churches (through the Presbyteries) to be very careful in the selection of elders and deacons, and endeavor to have them properly instructed before ordination in all the duties of their office, as required by Form of Government. (Par. 111-115 (see Art. 27–29), 1891.)

31. *When any person has been elected* to either of these offices, if the way be clear and he declares his purpose to accept, the Session shall appoint a day for his ordination. (F. G. 111.)

The court may reject. (See Art. 308 and 20.)

The day having arrived, and the Session being convened in the presence of the church, a sermon shall be preached, if convenient; after which the presiding minister shall state in a concise manner the warrant and nature of the office of ruling elder or deacon, together

with the character proper to be sustained and the duties to be fulfilled. Having done this, he shall propose to the candidate, in the presence of the church, the following questions, viz.:

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?

3. Do you approve of the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States?

4. Do you accept the office of ruling elder (or deacon, as the case may be) in this church, and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof?

5. Do you promise to study the peace, unity, edification and purity of the church?

The ruling elder or deacon elect having answered in the affirmative, the minister shall address to the members of the church the following question, viz:

Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge and receive this brother as a ruling elder (or deacon), and do you promise to yield him all that honor, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord to which his office, according to the word of God and the constitution of this church, entitles him? (F. G. 112.)

FORM OF ORDINATION, ETC.

32. *The members of this church*, having answered this question in the affirmative by holding up their right hands, the minister shall proceed to set apart the candidate with prayer and the laying on of the hands of the Session to the office of ruling elder (or deacon, as the case may be). Prayer being ended, the members of the Session (and the deacons, if the case be that of a deacon) shall take the newly-ordained officer by the hand, saying, in words to this effect: "We give you the right hand of fellowship, to take part in this office with us." The minister shall then say: "I now pronounce and declare that A. B. has been regularly elected, ordained, and installed a ruling elder, or deacon, in this church, agreeably to the word of God, and according to the constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and that, as such, he is entitled to all encouragement, honor, and obedience in the Lord. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." After which he shall give to the officer and to the church an exhortation suitable to the occasion. (F. G. 112.)

33. *When a ruling elder or deacon, who has been released from* his official relation, is again elected to his office in the same or another church, he shall be installed after the above form, with the omission of ordination. (F. G. 115.)

34. *When an elder or deacon has been absolved* from the censure of deposition he cannot be allowed to resume the exercise of his office in the church without re-election by the people. (F. G. 231.)

35. *As there were in the church, under the law,* elders of the people for the government thereof, so, in the gospel church, Christ has furnished others besides ministers of the word with gifts and commission to govern when called thereunto, which officers are entitled ruling elders. (F. G. 42.)

These ruling elders do not labor in the word and doctrine, but possess the same authority and eligibility to office in the courts of the church as the ministers of the word. Whenever, however, a ruling elder is Moderator of a Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly, any official duty devolving on him, the performance of which requires the exercise of functions pertaining only to the teaching elder, shall be remitted by him for execution to such minister of the word, being a member of the court, as he may select. (F. G. 43.)

Ruling elders, the immediate representatives of the people, are chosen by them, that, in conjunction with the pastors or ministers, they may exercise government and discipline, and take the oversight of the spiritual interests of the particular church, and also of the church generally, when called thereunto.

It appertains to their office, both severally and jointly, to watch diligently over the flock

committed to their charge, (1), that no corruption of doctrine or morals enter therein. Evils which they cannot correct by private admonition, they should bring to the notice of the Session. (2), They should visit the people at their homes, especially the sick. (3), They should instruct the ignorant, comfort the mourner, nourish and guard the children of the church. (4), They should pray with and for the people. (5), They should be diligent and careful in seeking the fruit of the preached word among the flock, and inform the pastor of cases of sickness, affliction, and awakening, and of all others which may need his special attention. And all those duties which private Christians are bound to discharge by the law of charity are especially incumbent upon them, by divine vocation, and are to be discharged as official duties. (F. G. 45.)

He may exhort even in other churches when directed so to do by a higher court. (1856, 1867.)

It does not belong to his office to administer the sacraments. (1870, North.)

[*Remark.*—But it is customary to assist in their distribution.]

36. *Where there is but one elder*, he may discharge all the duties of a Session, except those of a judicial nature. (1883.)

Is not entitled to the courtesy of being invited to sit in Presbytery as a corresponding or visiting member. (1883.)

OF THE DEACONS.

37. *The office of deacon* is set forth in the Scriptures as ordinary and perpetual in the church. (F. G. 46.)

Remark.—That is, the church cannot abolish the office, as it is appointed by Christ.

The term of office is for life. (But see Art. 40–45; 340.)

38. *To this office should be chosen* men of honest repute and approved piety, who are esteemed for their prudence and sound judgment, whose conversation becomes the gospel, and whose lives are exemplary; seeing that those duties to which all Christians are called in the way of beneficence are especially encumbent on the deacon, as an officer in Christ's house. (F. G. 48.)

Election, ordination, installation, removal from office, etc, see Art. 19–34.

39. *The duties of this office* especially relate to the care of the poor, and to the collection and distribution of the offerings of the people for pious uses, under the direction of the Session. To them also may be properly committed the management of the temporal affairs of the church. (F. G. 47, 23.)

They must keep a complete record of all transactions, an account of all funds, and submit the same to the Session, *at least* annually, for examination and approval. (See Art. 179.)

Removal or relieved from office, see Art. 40–45.

In churches where it is impossible to secure the appointment of a sufficient number of deacons, the duties of this office devolve on the ruling elders. (F. G. 50.)

Where it shall appear needful, the church Session may select and appoint godly women for the care of the sick, of prisoners, of poor widows and orphans, and, in general, for the relief of distress. (F. G. 51.)

OF HOW THE OFFICE OF RULING ELDER AND DEACON MAY BE VACATED.

40. *The offices of ruling elder and deacon* are perpetual, nor can they be laid aside at pleasure, nor can any person be degraded from either office but by deposition after regular trial; yet a ruling elder or deacon, though chargeable with neither heresy nor immorality, may become unacceptable in his official character to a majority of the church which he serves. In such case it is competent for the Session, upon application, either from the officer or the church, to dissolve the relation. But no such application from either party shall be granted without affording to the other party full opportunity for stating objections. (F. G. 113.)

[*Remark.*—The Rules of Discipline do not provide for this notice to congregations.]

If satisfied that God has not called him to the office, etc., see Art. 340.

As to the method of proceeding, see Art. 340, 341.

41. *The office of ruling elder and of deacon* is vacated by the acceptance and use of a letter of dismissal to another church. (See Art 165, North. 1867 and 1869.)

If the officer is received back by the return of the letter unused, such reception restores him to the same situation as if it had never been granted. (North, 1867.)

42. *By Removal.*—When a ruling elder or deacon removes permanently beyond the bounds of the church which he serves, his official relation shall thereby be dissolved, and the Session shall record the fact. (F. G. 114.)

43. *By order of Presbytery.*—The Presbytery may order ruling elders to cease from the exercise of their office, and this without the request of either the Session or any member of the church. (1834 and 69, North; 1888, complaint case.)

Presbytery may dissolve the relation without prejudice and without petition. (1894. See Art. 364.)

44. *By Resignation.*—He should resign when, because of conscientious scruples, he cannot carry out the order of a higher court. (1774.)

He should resign when so advised by a higher court, and the resignation should be made to the Session, and takes effect when accepted. (North, 1883.)

45. *By deposition*, after regular trial, for immorality or heresy or for neglect of duty habitually. (Art. 135, 340.)

By suspension from communion; and restoration to communion will not restore to office unless specifically stated. (1836.)

SESSION, ITS POWERS AND DUTIES.

46. *Particular Church.*—Its jurisdiction being a joint power is lodged in the hands of the church Session, consisting of the pastor and ruling elders. (F. G. 22.)

47. *The church Session consists of* the pastor or pastors, if there be any, and the ruling elders of a church. (F. G. 63.)

Ordination is necessary to a seat in the Session in a judicial case. (1868, N. S.)

Session cannot ask a minister to sit as corresponding member, nor can such an one be assigned as counsel for an accused. (1851.)

48. *Two ruling elders*, if there be more than this number, with the pastor, if there be one, shall be necessary to constitute a quorum. But the pastor and one elder may constitute a quorum in cases where there are only two elders. (F. G. 63.)

Less than a quorum can do no valid act. (1861.) But if they do act, it may become valid by its subsequent adoption by a quorum or by higher court. (1870, North.) Any two members being met at the time and place appointed, may adjourn from time to time until a quorum appear. (Part. Rule 389 (3).)

49. *The pastor is, for prudential reasons, Moderator of the Session.* (F. G. 54.)

50. *In churches where there are two or more pastors*, they shall, when present, preside alternately. (F. G. 66; see Art. 390.)

In case of the absence of the pastor, or when, for prudential reasons, it may appear advisable that some other minister should preside, such minister belonging to the same Presbytery as the pastor, with the concurrence of the elders, may designate, shall be invited to preside in his place. (F. G. 64.)

The pastor is a member of Session even if for certain reasons he does not preside. (1890, North.)

51. *When the church is without a pastor*, the Moderator of the Session shall be either a minister appointed for that purpose by the Presbytery, or one invited by the Session to preside on a particular occasion. But when it is inconvenient to procure the attendance of such a Moderator, the Session may proceed without it. (F. G. 65.)

In judicial cases, this Moderator shall always be a member of the same Presbytery to which the church belongs. (F. G. 65.)

A stated supply, or even a pastor elect, has no authority in a particular church, and hence cannot act as Moderator of the Session except by appointment of Presbytery or by invitation of the Session "on a particular occasion." (1877, 1880, North.)

52. *A minister invited by the Session to act as Moderator* should not vote in a case before

the Session, even in case of a tie vote—he is Moderator by courtesy only. (1886.)

Note.— A licentiate cannot act as Moderator; he is not a minister.

A minister of another denomination cannot act as Moderator. (1869, N. S. (1).)

[*Remark.*—It will be seen from the above that there must be a minister present at every meeting of the Session, if practicable. Where there is a pastor there is no meeting provided for without his presence, or the presence of a minister nominated by him.]

53. *The Session shall hold stated meetings* at least quarterly. Moreover, the pastor has power to convene the Session whenever he deems it requisite, and shall always do so when requested by two of the ruling elders. And when there is no pastor, it may be convened by two ruling elders. (F. G. 68.)

The Session shall also convene when directed to do so by the Presbytery. (F. G. 68.)

Meetings of the Session shall ordinarily be opened and closed with prayer. (F. G. 71.)

By "ordinarily" is meant that this is within the discretion of Session.

DOCKET FOR SESSION.

(Suggested.)

1. Meet at least quarterly, and whenever the Moderator or two elders request it.

2. Quorum—pastor, if there be one, and two elders, if there be so many.

3. Open and close with prayer, ordinarily.
4. Approve minutes of last meeting.
5. Receive and dismiss members.
6. Look after all the interests of the church, and concert measures for its welfare.
7. Are there any cases of sickness or distress among our members or in our bounds?
8. Are there any members walking disorderly?
9 Appoint representatives to each regular meeting of Presbytery and Synod, and on their return hear report as to their diligence, and adopt and send a narrative for last twelve months to each meeting.
10. Supervise the work of the deacons, and examine their records at least annually.
11. At each spring meeting send up a statistical report narrative and the record book of session for review.

54. *It is the duty of the clerk*, whose continuance in office shall be during the pleasure of the court, (*a*) besides recording the transactions, (*b*) to preserve the records carefully, (*c*) to grant extracts from them whenever properly required. (F. G. 56.)

The Minutes shall contain—see Art. 55; (1) in judicial case—see Art. 55; 232, 233; (2) names of members present and absent—1849, R.; (3) narratives and statistical reports, which must also be signed by the clerk—1849, R.; (4) pages of the record should be numbered—1865, R.; (5) overtures answered must be described—1865, R.; (6) that the meetings were

opened and closed with prayer—R. (With the Session this is discretionary—O., 1894; as the F. G. says "ordinarily" in case of sessional meetings.)

55. *Every Session shall keep a fair record of its proceedings;* which record shall be at least once in every year submitted to the inspection of the Presbytery. (F. G. 69.)

Every Session shall keep a fair record of baptisms, those admitted to the Lord's table, of non-communicating members, of deaths and dismissions of church members. (F. G. 70.)

The names of ministers should not be entered on communicants' roll. (1843.)

It is not necessary that the clerk should be a member of the court, but must be under its jurisdiction. (*Hodge, P. Law.*)

The clerk of the Session by virtue of his office is the clerk of the congregation, and should keep the records of the congregation's meetings, which should be reviewed by the Session, and by its order incorporated with its own records. (1886, North.)

Note.—This was customary, but the new Book of Discipline in the church (North) makes it mandatory.

In judicial cases everything that influenced the judgment of the court, and the entire description of the subject matter of a complaint (R., 1845), and the name of the court complained of (R., 1815, 40, 46, 47), the entire exception to a lower court's records, and it must

also be entered in lower court's records. (See Art. 252.)

If it is desired to amend the records, after their approval by a higher court, the consent of the higher court must be obtained. (1862, N. S.; 1878–1880, North.) The consent must be unanimous. (1842.)

[*Remark.*—The reason seems to be that the endorsement of the higher court makes the acts of the lower court virtually its own, and to prevent too much intermeddling with what a higher court has sanctioned. It would be virtually a lower court correcting a higher one.]

The minutes of a church become its official record as soon as they are approved by the court, and the signature of its stated clerk is evidence that they have been thus approved. (1890.)

Errors subsequently discovered by the court in its own records, not approved by a higher court, may be corrected at a subsequent meeting, the correction appearing only in the minutes of that meeting. (1890.)

[*Remark.*—A reference to the page containing the correction should be made in the margin of the minute corrected.]

Records in a superior court should also contain reasons for ordering the reversal of a judicial sentence. (R., 1827.)

56. *The church Session is charged with maintaining* the spiritual government of the church; for which purpose it has the power to inquire into the knowledge, principles, and

Christian conduct of the church members under its care; to censure those found delinquent. (F. G. 67; see also C. F., ch. xxx.)

57. *The infant seed of believers* are, through the covenant and by right of birth, members of the church; hence they are entitled to baptism and pastoral oversight, instruction, and government of the church with a view to their embracing Christ, and thus possessing personally all the benefits of the covenant. (F. G. 29.) All baptized persons are entitled to the watchful care, instruction, and government of the church, even though they are adults and have made no profession of faith in Christ. (F. G. 30.)

All non-communicating members shall be deemed under the care of their parents, if they live under the parental roof and are minors; or otherwise under that of the church where they reside, or with which they ordinarily worship. (F. G. 151.)

58. *The oversight of the children* of the church is committed by God primarily to believing parents, who are responsible to the church for the faithful discharge of this duty.

The responsibility of parents continues during the minority of their children, and extends to all such conduct contrary to the purity and sobriety of the gospel as parents may and ought to restrain and control. (F. G. 147.)

When the children of the church arrive at years of discretion, they are bound to discharge all the duties of church members. If they give evidence of saving faith in Christ, together with

a correct walk and conversation, they should be informed that it is their privilege and duty to make a profession of faith in Christ and to come to his table. If they associate themselves with the profane, the church should still cherish them in faith, and ought to use all such means as the word of God warrants and the Christian prudence of church officers shall dictate for reclaiming them and bringing them to appreciate their covenant privileges and to discharge their covenant obligations. (F. G. 149.)

Those adult non-communicating members who submit with meekness and gratitude to the government and instruction of the church are entitled to special attention. Their rights under the covenant should be frequently and fully explained, and their duties enforced on their consciences. They should be warned of the sin and danger of neglecting their covenant obligations, and urged, by the mercies of Christ, to come up to their full discharge. (F. G. 150.)

Children born within the pale of the visible church, and dedicated to God in baptism, are under the inspection and government of the church, and are to be taught to read and repeat the Catechism, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. They are to be taught to pray, to abhor sin, to fear God, to love and to obey the Lord Jesus Christ. And when they come to years of discretion they ought to be urgently reminded that they are members of the church by birthright, and that it is their

duty and privilege to personally accept Christ, confess him before men, and seek admission to the Lord's supper. (D. W., x.)

Licentiates and candidates for licensure, though under the care of Presbytery, are, nevertheless, under the jurisdiction of the particular church in which they hold their membership, and must be tried by it for any offence, and reported to Presbytery, so that their license may be withdrawn, or that they may be dismissed as candidates. The power of Presbytery over them extends only to their dismissal as candidates for the ministry; it is the judge of their fitness for the sacred office. If any further discipline seem necessary, the Presbytery should inform the Session, and remit them to it for such discipline as seems to be required. (1829.)

THE CARE WHICH THE SESSION HAS OVER ITS MEMBERS IS EXERCISED THROUGH DISCIPLINE.

59. *Discipline* is the exercise of that authority and the application of that system of laws which the Lord Jesus Christ has appointed in his church. The term has two senses:

The one referring to the whole government, inspection, training, guardianship, and control which the church maintains over its members, its officers, and its courts. (F. G. 143.) *In this sense* all baptized persons, being members of the church, are subject to its discipline and entitled to the benefits thereof. (F. G. 144.[1])

[1] Not exact quotation, but the full sense.

By discipline in this sense is meant inspection, remonstrance, rebuke, private admonition, and is that general oversight of the flock which belongs to the officers of the church as charged by the Holy Ghost with the duty of watching for souls, and while it is a function of that charity which all members of the church are bound to possess and cherish to each other, it is yet the special and official function of the rulers, to be exercised with authority toward those who are committed to their care. (1879.)

[*Remark.*—The reproof by an officer ought to be regarded with great reverence, since it is appointed by Christ.]

60. *Discipline* in the other sense has a restricted and technical sense, signifying judicial prosecution. (F. G. 143.) *In this sense* it refers to only those who have made a profession of faith in Christ. (F. G. 144.[1])

The ends of discipline as it involves judicial prosecution are:

1. The rebuke of offences.
2. The removal of scandal.
3. The vindication of the honor of Christ.
4. The promotion of the purity and general edification of the church.
5. And the spiritual good of the offenders themselves.

The power which Christ has given to the rulers of his church is for edification and not for destruction; it is a dispensation of mercy

[1] Not exact quotation, but the full sense.

and not of wrath. As in the preaching of the word the wicked are doctrinally separated from the good, so, by discipline, the church authoritatively separates between the holy and the profane. In this it acts the part of a tender mother, correcting her children for their good, that every one of them may be presented faultless in the day of the Lord Jesus. (F. G. 146.)

61. If it should seem necessary to inquire into the knowledge, principle, and Christian conduct of the communicants, with a view of formally censuring, they must be formally found to deserve such censure according to the following manner: The person or persons must be formally charged with an offence. (See Art. 64, *et seq.*)

[*Remark.*—Here it becomes necessary to inquire what is such an offence as a member of the church can be censured for. Censure is the only power that a church court has. Of this there are three sorts. (See Art. 122.)]

OFFENCES ARE OF FOUR KINDS OR CLASSES.

62. 1. *Personal offences* are violations of the divine law considered in special relation of wrongs or injuries to particular individuals. (F. G. 154.)

2. *General offences* are heresies or immoralities having no such relation or considered apart from it. (*Ibid.*)

3. *Private offences* are such as are known only to a few persons.

4. *Public offences* are those which are notorious (F. G. 155), but all of them being sins

against God are therefore grounds of discipline. (F. G. 153.)

63. (*a*), *An offence the proper object of judicial process* is anything in the principles or practice of a church member professing faith in Christ which is contrary to the word of God. The Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly, together with the formularies of government, discipline and worship, are accepted by the Presbyterian Church in the United States as standard expositions of the teachings of Scripture in relation to both faith and practice. Nothing, therefore, ought to be considered by any court as an offence, or admitted as a matter of accusation, which cannot be proved to be such from Scripture, as interpreted in these standards. (F. G. 152.)

(*b*), *Wilfully absenting one's self* from the Lord's table is always an offence. (F. G. 225.) Wilful absence for months from public worship is sufficient to warrant suspension. (1859, J.) Disagreement with pastor is no justification. (1854, O. S. J.)

(*c*), *Disobedience to civil magistrate.*—The fact of disobedience and contempt of the civil magistrate without a charge of moral turpitude in the mode of such disobedience is not a sufficient ground for the ecclesiastical sentence to be inflicted and continued. Moral turpitude must be charged. (J., 1887.)

[*Remark.*—But there was much difference of opinion on this point.]

63. What constitutes an offence the object of judicial prosecution is to be decided by the courts of original jurisdiction. (1879.)

(*d*), *Worldly Amusements.*—In 1869 the Assembly solemnly and earnestly enjoined upon all the Sessions and Presbyteries under its care the absolute necessity of enforcing the discipline provided in our constitution against offences, under the word offence, including attendance by our members upon theatrical exhibitions and performances and promiscuous dancing;[1] against intemperance and against availing themselves of the expedients for evading pecuniary obligations now permitted by the legislation of the country, in such a manner as cannot be justified by a conscience enlightened by the word of God, and as must dishonor the cause of Christ.

Dancing.—The Assembly in 1865 declared that dancing was worldliness. The Assembly has decided "that dancing in all its forms are evils, whether practiced in private parlors or public halls. Some are more mischievous than others, but all are evil and should be discountenanced. . . . So, likewise, with card playing." And repeatedly exhorts the Sessions to use such measures as wisdom and Christian prudence suggests to check these evils. (1865, 1869, 1877.)

Session may excommunicate for lascivious dancing, when other methods fail. (1893.)

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[1] These amusements were disapproved also in 1818.

In 1877 it also urged ministers and Sessions to use all means of checking this evil, even to separating them from the church. The Assembly refuses to make any further deliverance, because the evils referred to are to be met not by resort to the deliverance of the Assembly, but by care on the part of the court of original jurisdiction. (1880.) In 1881 it affirmed that the deliverance of 1877 has not been revoked.

63. (*e*), *The Sessions have no power to make new rules of membership*, but it has undoubted right to define what is an offence warranting judicial prosecution. (1865.)

(*f*), The Assembly has no power to make law for the church in the matter of offences, or to give its deliverances, in this, the force of judicial decisions, nor has it power to order inferior courts to institute process, except in cases brought before it under Chap. xxii., Sec. I., B. D. (F. G. p. 240.) (Which is that of review and control.) Here the superior court's order will refer to a particular court in matters brought before it in particular cases, and not generally.

[*Remark.*—The upper courts cannot order inferior courts to institute process except in a matter brought up regularly by appeal, complaint, or review and control. This is the reason why there is no discipline in these offences. The inferior courts have no such unity of opinion as is expressed in the Assembly. Hence a member disciplined in one church

might be received by an adjoining one who would not regard the matter as an offence.]

(*g*), *Sale of Intoxicants*.—The traffic and use of intoxicating liquors is a great evil, and the Assembly recommends to all our people the use of all legitimate means to banish it from the land. (1886.) The Minutes of Synod of Pittsburg disapproved, so far as they seem to establish a general rule in regard to the use and sale of ardent spirits as a beverage, which use and sale are generally to be decidedly disapproved, but each case must be decided in view of all the attendant circumstances that go to modify and give character to the same. (1842, 1878, R. and C.)

(*h*), *Offences*.—The Assembly has declared that the following things are offences: Gambling and profanity. (1862.)

(*i*), *Sabbath-breakers* should be disciplined. The Assembly exhorts the Sessions to admonish and reprove, in the name of Christ, those who violate the Sabbath, and if they persist in their infractions that it be regarded as an offence justifying and demanding suspension.

(1), *Condemns the publication of Sunday newspapers*. (2), The reading of same. (3), The running of Sunday trains. (4), The riding upon and patronizing the Sunday trains. Ministers going to and returning from their appointments as cannot be justified on grounds of necessity or mercy. (1885, 1886, 1887.)

The Assembly directed the Presbytery to enjoin upon the Sessions to take notice of the

infractions of this commandment, and, when necessary, to administer discipline, at least so far as admonition and reproof are concerned. (1884.)

The Sunday train, the Sunday newspaper and Sunday saloon are the chief factors in undermining the sacred authority of the day. (1891.)

Indefinite suspension is too severe a sentence to inflict for working on the Sabbath as a telephone operator. (1894, J.)

(*j*), *Attendance upon the ministrations of deposed ministers* is contrary to the order of the gospel and ought to be discouraged and discountenanced by every friend of the Redeemer's kingdom. (1833.)

63. (*k*), *The propriety and duty of putting a member on trial for an offence* is to be decided by the Session in the exercise of a sound discretion. Its discretion is reviewable by a superior court under the proper form. (Appeal and Complaint, Review and Control.) The Session is not bound to put one on trial because a prosecutor appears. (J., 1882, Art. 71, 242.)

[(*l*), *Remarks.*—The Session should consider the purity and the peace and edification of the church. All these are matters of great importance and call for Christian prudence and wisdom. The first thing to be considered is the honor and good name of Christ, that his cause be not scandalized and reproached by the world. The church of Christ gains nothing by the publication to the world of the faults of its mem-

bers, therefore great caution is to be exercised by the Session that it does not by indiscretion make notorious that which otherwise would not be known generally, for there is danger that every case may become notorious. It must not be confidently presumed that the matter will end with the Session. Remember, an appeal lies in every case to the superior courts, by which a private matter may be blazed abroad to the injury of souls. Let the Session consider two things, what is for the good of all the souls under its care, and what for the good of the offender. The rod may drive the offender further away, but to withhold it may cause the evil to grow and spread so that others will follow in the same road and the evil assume such proportions that it cannot be dealt with. If the tares come to choke out the wheat, rest assured it was because the cultivator lacked wisdom and failed to show diligence at the proper time.

[The purity of the whole church is not to be jeopardized by the one soul that is erring. Yet the Session must not even apparently connive at scandalous or grievous sins.

[Not every sin is to be punished by the censures of the church. Some sins are more heinous than others, and this arises from (1), The nature of the sin itself, or (2), From the circumstances under which it was committed or which surrounds it. For a fuller explanation, see Larger Catechism, Quest. 151.

[There is a popular error that should be

guarded against—that all offenders are to be treated in the same manner, or justice is violated—this is not true. Circumstances alter cases. The person offending is to be considered, more latitude must be allowed for the young convert than for the old, who are riper in experience, the thoughtlessness of youth, varying degrees of knowledge, surrounding circumstances, degrees of rebellion shown when reproved, the deliberation shown in the commission of the offence and persistency of the conduct. More can be expected of the officers than of the members, since they are under special vows as leaders.]

PROCESS AND JURISDICTION.

64. *Original jurisdiction* in relation to others than ministers of the gospel pertains exclusively to the Sessions (and process must be entered before the Session of the church to which the member belongs, F. G. 192), unless the Session shall be unable to try the person or persons accused (or rendered incapable of exercising jurisdiction, F. G. 192), in which case the Presbytery shall have jurisdiction, and the process shall be entered therein. (F. G. 161 and 192.[1])

65. *When an offence alleged to have been committed at a distance* is not likely otherwise to become known to the court having jurisdiction, it shall be the duty of the court within

[1] Not exact language, but the entire sense.

whose bounds the facts occurred, after satisfying itself that there is probable ground of accusation, to send notice to the court having jurisdiction, which shall at once proceed against the accused; or the whole case may be remitted for trial to the coördinate court within whose bounds the offence is alleged to have been committed. (F. G. 180.)

66. *When it is impracticable to immediately commence process* against an accused member, the Session may, if it thinks the edification of the church requires it, prevent the accused from approaching the Lord's table until the charges against him have been examined. (F. G. 195.)

67. *When a member of a church court is under process,* all his official functions shall be suspended at its discretion; but this shall never be done by way of censure. (F. G. 170.)

68. *Process, in case of scandal,* shall commence within the space of one year after the offence was committed, unless it has recently become flagrant. When, however, a church member shall commit an offence after removing to a place far distant from his former residence, and where his connection with the church is unknown, in consequence of which circumstances process cannot be instituted within the time above specified, the recent discovery of the church membership of the individual shall be considered as equivalent to the offence itself having recently become flagrant. The same

principle, in like circumstances, shall also apply to ministers. (F. G. 191.)

69. *Process against an offender* shall not be commenced unless some person or persons undertake to make out the charges; unless the court finds it necessary for the honor of religion to take the steps as provided in Chap. V., Part 2, F. G. 162. (See Art. 75, 65, 63 (*k*).)

70. *An injured party* shall not become a prosecutor of personal offences (Art. 62) without having tried the means of reconciliation and of reclaiming the offender required by Christ: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee. go and tell him of his faults between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." (Matthew xviii. 15, 16.)

A church court may, however, judicially investigate personal offences as if general when the interests of religion seem to demand it. So, also, those to whom private offences (Art. 62) are known cannot become prosecutors without having previously endeavored to remove the scandal by private means. (F. G. 165.)

71. *Great caution* ought to be exercised in receiving accusations from any person who is known to indulge a malignant spirit towards the accused; who is not of good character; who is himself under censure or process; who is

deeply interested in any respect in the conviction of the accused, or who is known to be litigious, rash, or highly imprudent. (F. G. 168, 63 (*k*).)

72. *When the offence is general* (Art. 62), the cause may be conducted by any person appearing as prosecutor, or by a prosecutor appointed by the court. (F. G. 166.)

[*Remark.*—As the prosecutor is the representative of the church which is the accuser (Art. 83), he should be a communicant of the church and under jurisdiction of the court. (See Art. 73 and 84.)]

73. *Every voluntary prosecutor* shall be previously warned that if he fail to show probable cause of the charges he shall himself be censured as a slanderer of the brethren, in proportion to the malignity or rashness manifested in the prosecution. (F. G. 169.)

74. *It may be that no one is willing* to undertake to prosecute an offender or to report him; hence a guilty party may fail to be dealt with. To meet such a case, it is provided that the court itself may, on its own motion, do so as follows:

75. *It is the duty of all church Sessions and Presbyteries* to exercise care over those subject to their authority, and they shall, with due diligence and great discretion, demand from such persons satisfactory explanations concerning reports affecting their Christian character. This duty is more imperative when those who deem

themselves aggrieved by injurious reports shall ask an investigation. (See Art. 242.)

If such an investigation, however originating, should result in raising a strong presumption of the guilt of the party involved, the court shall institute process, and shall appoint a prosecutor to prepare the indictment and to conduct the case. (See Art. 63 (*k*), 242; F. G. 162.)

76. *This prosecutor shall be a member of the court*, except that in a case before the Session he shall be any communicating member of the same congregation with the accused. (F. G. 162.)

When the prosecution is instituted by the court, the previous steps required by our Lord in the case of personal offences are not necessary. There are many cases, however, in which it will promote the interest of religion to send a committee to converse in a private manner with the offender, and endeavor to bring him to a sense of his guilt before instituting actual process. (F. G. 167.)

Summons to appear before the Session under this section is not a citation of process. Ten days' notice is not necessary, but if the party summoned refuse to appear, citation may be issued, as in cases of process, and upon failure to appear upon a second citation he may be suspended for contempt. (1881.)

77. *Confession before committee.*—It was held in 1870 that a confession made to a committee waiting upon the accused would not warrant a sentence upon the report of the com-

mittee that the party confessed guilt; the case should proceed as if no confession was made.

[*Remark.*—In the old book the duty of the committee, if he confessed, was to endeavor to bring him to repentance. That book also provided that though the accused declare in writing and in the presence of the court itself his purpose not to obey the citation, the court shall in no case deviate from the prescribed course. The omission of this provision in the new book, and the change of language as to the committee's duty, proves that this decision is now of no weight.]

78. *When a charge* is laid before a Session or Presbytery, nothing shall be done at the first meeting of the court, unless by consent of parties (Art. 83), except to appoint a prosecutor (Art. 84, ch. 6) and order the indictment to be drawn (Art. 85) and a copy served upon the accused, with the names of the witnesses then known to support it, and to cite all parties and their witnesses (Art. 79) to appear and be heard at another meeting. (F. G. 174, Art. 63 (*k*).)

79. *Citation.*—The time which must elapse between the serving of the first citation on the accused person, and the meeting of the court at which he must appear, shall be at least ten days. (F. G. 178.)

The citation shall be issued and signed by the Moderator or the, clerk by order and in the name of the court; he shall also issue citations to such witnesses as either party shall nominate to appear on his behalf. (F. G. 175.)

[*Remark.*—*Citations* shall be served upon the witnesses at least ten days before the time set for their appearance.]

80. *When an accused person shall refuse to obey a citation*, he shall be cited a second time, and this citation shall be accompanied with a notice that if he do not appear at the time appointed unless providentially hindered, which fact he must make known to the court, or that if he appear and refuse to plead, he shall be dealt with for his contumacy, as hereinafter provided. (F. G. 177; see Art. 81.) The time allotted for appearance on this subsequent citation shall be left to the discretion of the court, provided that it be not less than is quite sufficient for a seasonable and convenient compliance with the citation. (F. G. 178.)

81. *When an accused person*, having been twice duly cited, shall refuse to appear before the Session, or appearing, refuse to plead, the court shall enter upon its record the fact and the nature of the charge also, and he shall thereupon be suspended from sealing ordinances for his contumacy. This sentence shall be made public, and shall in no case be removed until he has not only repented of his contumacy, but has given satisfaction in relation to the charges against him. (F. G. 193.) As to appearance and pleading, see Art. 89, 2.

82. *If the charge be one of gross crime or heresy*, and the accused persist in his contumacy, the court may proceed to inflict the highest censure. (F. G. 194.)

[*Remark.*—The old book provides that the second citation should contain a notice that if the person cited failed to appear at the appointed time, that the court, besides censuring him for contumacy, would, after assigning him counsel, proceed to take the testimony as if he were present. (Ch. iv., Sec. 13.)

[The new book makes no provision for taking the testimony in such case, the party is suspended for contumacy; or, as it might be acting too hastily to suspend at this second meeting for contumacy, it would be best in such case to postpone action until next meeting. Let your record show even more patience and forbearance than the strict letter of the law demands]

83. *The original and only parties in a case* of process are the accused and the accuser. The accuser is always the Presbyterian Church in the United States, whose honor and purity are to be maintained. (F. G. 163.)

84. *The prosecutor, whether voluntary or appointed,* is always the representative of the church, and as such has all its rights in the case. (F. G. 163.)

[*Remark.*—The prosecutor, therefore, being always a party representatively, if the accused appeals, becomes appellee, but if accused be acquitted, he, the prosecutor, in that event, not being a "party against whom a decision has been rendered" (F. G. 225), cannot appeal. But he may complain, because any member of the church submitting to its authority may

complain against every species of decision, except where a party against whom a decision has been rendered takes his appeal against it. (F. G. 267.) The object of the complaint is to insure that justice is done to all parties; that, on the one hand, the guilty shall not escape through a partiality of the lower courts and, on the other hand, that an injustice shall not be done to any who are willing to submit to injustice rather than to have the trouble of conducting an appeal; in either of which cases the church suffers reproach by the partiality of the court.

[The old Book of Discipline makes this very clear. "The cases in which complaint is proper and advisable are such as the following: Where the judgment of the inferior court may be favorable to the only party which has been placed at their bar, or the judgment may do no wrong to any individual; or the party who is aggrieved by it may decline the trouble of conducting an appeal. In any of these cases no appeal is to be expected." Notice, however, that in case a complaint is taken by the prosecutor or any one else, that the parties are denominated complainant and respondent, and the party on defence is then not the original party, but the court. (Art. 245.) Yet as the accused (original) party is personally affected and interested he ought to be appointed, or, at least, permitted to nominate the respondent's representative. (See Art. 245–'46.)]

85. *Every indictment shall begin,* "In the

name of the Presbyterian Church in the United States," and shall conclude, "against the peace, unity and purity of the church, and the honor and majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ as King and Head thereof." (F. G. 164.)

86. *In drawing the indictment*, the times' places and circumstances should, if possible, be particularly stated, that the accused may have opportunity to make his defence. (F. G. 176.)

The prosecutor should prepare the indictment. (See Art. 76.)

87. *Before proceeding to trial*, courts ought to ascertain that their citations have been duly served. (F. G. 181.)

[*Remark.*—Civil courts require that their citations shall be made by giving to the person summoned a written copy, or leaving it at his residence or usual place of business with some person of discretion, and this is the rule with the church. (North.) And it is doubtful if any other service would be regular.]

88. *In every process, if deemed expedient*, there may be a committee appointed, which shall be called the Judicial Committee, and whose duty it shall be to digest and arrange all the papers, and to prescribe under the direction of the court the whole order of the proceedings. (F. G. 182.)

[*Remark.*—This seems to be inapplicable to Session. (See Art. 89.)]

WHEN A COURT OF FIRST RESORT PROCEEDS TO THE TRIAL OF A CAUSE, THE FOLLOWING ORDER SHALL BE OBSERVED:

89. (1), *The Moderator shall charge the court.*—When trial is about to begin it shall be the duty of the Moderator to solemnly announce from the chair that the court is about to pass to the consideration of the cause, and to enjoin upon the members to recollect and regard their high character as judges of a court of Jesus Christ and the solemn duty in which they are about to engage. (F. G. 183.)

(2), *The indictment shall be read* to the accused, if present, and he shall be called upon to say whether he be guilty or not and the answer of the accused heard. (F. G. 174, 186.) Accused parties may plead in writing when they cannot be personally present, and parties necessarily absent should have counsel assigned them. (F. G. 174.)

[*Remark.*—A distinction is made between parties necessarily absent and those who are absent through contumacy. In the latter case he is suspended for contumacy, and the nature of the charges and such absence are noted on the records. No testimony is taken (Art. 81, but see Art. 97), but if necessarily absent, counsel is assigned him and he is not suspended for contumacy and the testimony may be taken. (See Art. 97.) It is difficult to determine what is meant by necessarily absent. If through physical inability to attend, then it would seem more consistent to postpone the trial, unless

other parties are on trial and postponement would work injury to them.]

A written answer seems to be contemplated. (See Art 232.)

If the party confess, the court may deal with him according to its discretion. (F G. 174)

[*Remark.*—Care must be taken that the accused confess to the guilt, the sin, and not simply the commission of the act, since the act may be admitted but its sinfulness denied. Be sure that he confesses to the sin as charged. Better have it signed.]

If he plead and take issue the trial shall proceed. (F. G. 174.)

Either party may for cause challenge the right of any member to sit in the trial of the case, which question shall be decided by the members of the court other than the one challenged. (F. G. 187.)

89. (3), *The witnesses* for the prosecutor, and then those for the accused, shall be examined. (F. G. 186.)

90. *All persons of proper age and intelligence are competent witnesses*, except such as do not believe in the existence of God or a future state of rewards and punishments. (F. G. 206.)

91. (*a*), *The accused party* may be allowed, but shall not be compelled, to testify. (*Ibid.*)

(*b*), *The accuser* shall be required to testify on demand of the accused. (*Ibid.*)

(*c*), *A husband or wife* shall not be compelled

to bear testimony one against the other in any court. (F. G 207.)

(*d*), *The prosecutor* may be a witness. (1858, R.)

(*e*). *Non church members*, even heathen, if in good repute, may be received as witnesses. (North, 1881.)

(*f*), *A member of the court* may be a witness, and if he refuses to testify when present, may be censured for contumacy, although he has not been cited (1854), and the prosecutor has the right to insist upon it. (North, 1878.)

92. *An officer or private member* of the church refusing to testify may be censured for contumacy. (F G. 217.)

93. *Either party has the right to challenge a witness* whom he believes to be incompetent, and the court shall examine and decide upon his competency. (F. G. 206.)

94. *On all questions* arising during the progress of a trial the discussion shall be first between the parties, and when they have been heard they may be required to withdraw from the court until the members deliberate upon and decide the point. (F. G. 185)

This withdrawal must be a literal one, the parties leaving the house. (1859, J.)

95. *In the discussion of all questions* arising in his own case, the accused shall exercise the rights of defendant only, and not of judge. (F. G. 171.)

96. *The oath of affirmation* to a witness shall be administered by the Moderator in the following terms: "You solemnly promise, in the presence of God, that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter which you are called to witness, as you shall answer it to the Great Judge of the quick and the dead."

If, however, at any time a witness should present himself before a court, who, for conscientious reasons, prefers to swear or affirm in any other manner, he should be allowed to do so. (F. G. 211.)

97. *In order that the trial may be fair and impartial*, the witnesses shall be examined in the presence of the accused, or, at least, after he shall have received due citation to attend. (F. G. 184.)

They shall be examined first by the party introducing them, then cross-examined by the opposite party, after which any member of the court or either party may put additional interrogatories. But no question may be put or answered except by permission of the Moderator, subject to an appeal to the court, and the court shall not permit questions irrelevant or frivolous to the charge at issue. (F. G. 210.)

98. *Every question put to a witness* shall, if required, be reduced to writing. When answered it shall, together with the answer, be recorded if deemed by the court, or either party, of sufficient impartance. (F. G. 212.)

99. *And the testimony of the witness shall be read to him* for his approbation and subscription. (F. G. 212.) Testimony must be recorded in minute book. (Art. 232.)

100. *No witness afterward to be examined,* except a member of the court, shall be present during the examination of another witness in the same case, if either party object. (F. G. 209.)

101. *The records of a court* or any part of them, whether original or transcribed, if regularly authenticated by the Moderator or clerk, shall be deemed good and sufficient evidence in every other court. (F. G. 213; F. G. 56, same effect.)

102. *In like manner testimony taken by one court* and regularly certified shall be received by every other court as no less valid than if it had been taken by itself. (F. G. 214.)

103. *Testimony at a distance.*—When it is not convenient for a court to have the whole or, perhaps, any part of the testimony, in any particular case, taken in its presence, a commission shall be appointed, or a coördinate court requested, to take the testimony in question, which shall be considered as if taken in the presence of the court; of which commission, and of the time and place of its meeting, due notice shall be given to the opposite party, that he may have an opportunity of attending. And if the accused shall desire, on his part, to take testimony at a distance, for his own exculpation, he shall give notice to the court of the time and

place at which it is proposed to take it, that a commission, or a coördinate court, as in the former case, may be appointed for the purpose. Or the testimony may be taken on written interrogatories by filing the same with the clerk of the court having jurisdiction of the cause, and giving two weeks' notice thereof to the adverse party, during which time he may file cross interrogatories, if he desire it; and the testimony shall then be taken by the commission or coördinate court in answer to the direct and cross interrogatories, if such are filed, and no notice need be given of the time and place of taking the testimony. (F. G. 215, as amended 1893.)

104. *When an offence with which an accused person stands charged took place at a distance*, and it is inconvenient for witnesses to appear before the court having jurisdiction, that court may either appoint a commission of its body, or request the coördinate court contiguous to the place where the facts occurred to take the testimony for it. The accused shall always have reasonable notice of the time and place of meeting of this commission or coördinate court. (F. G. 179.)

105. *This commission shall be composed* of two or three members of the court, and the moderator ought to be one member of it by all means in a case before the Session.

[*Remark.*—It is extremely doubtful whether a commission otherwise constituted would be regular, for the same reasons would apply to

this as to the propriety in a judicial case of having always a minister to moderate the court. The acts and doings of this commission are subject to the review and correction upon return, made to the Session. Minutes must be kept and all testimony in writing. The same rules that govern the Session will also apply to the commission. If at the meeting of the commission only one member appear, he might take the testimony if the parties consent.]

106. *The testimony of more than one witness* shall be necessary in order to establish any charge; yet, if in addition to the testimony of one witness, corroborative evidence be produced, the offence shall be considered to be proved. (F. G. 208.)

107. *It belongs to the court to judge* of the degree of credibility to be attached to all evidence. (F. G. 206.)

108. *The conviction of a church member in a civil court* of an offence, recognized as such by our standards, does not authorize the conviction of the member by the church court without trial, upon the evidence of such conviction in civil court. It is a sacred right of every member to have a trial according to the laws and methods of the church before condemnation. The process of civil courts differs so much from that of our church judicatories, and their decisions are not so infallible that our church judicatories can adopt them without investigation. (1885.)

[*Remark.*—It would seem that on the same grounds a church judicatory should not allow the fact that any case is proceeding in the civil courts to arrest the church judicatory. Often what is an offence to state laws is none when measured by the laws of the church. There are many instances now of a variation and even conflict between state laws and those which the church is bound to maintain. For example, marriage and divorce, bigamy, adultery, fornication, bastardy, perjury. A party may be acquitted when the evidence is so strong that the community complains of it as an outrage upon justice; or, on the other hand, condemned unjustly or acquitted on technicalities or by suppression of the evidence. The church officers are the guardians of the purity of the church, and it has no right to commit this sacred trust to the hands of worldly men, who are often profane and godless.]

109. *No evidence should be admitted* that tends to criminate the character of any persons who are not on trial or connected with the case. A person charged with slander by a court (Par. 162, Art. 75) cannot introduce evidence to prove the truth of the slander, when the slandered are not on trial or connected with the prosecution. (1852, J.)

AFTER THE WHOLE TESTIMONY HAS BEEN GIVEN.

110. *The parties shall be heard,* first the prosecutor, then the accused, and the prosecutor shall close. (F. G. 189.)

111. *No professional counsel* shall be permitted as such to appear and plead in cases of process in any court; but an accused person may, if he desires it, be represented before the Session by any communicating member of the same particular church, or before any other court by any member of the court. (F. G. 190.)

The parties shall then retire from the court. (See Art. 94.)

112. *Next, the roll shall be called*, that each may express his opinion of the case. (F. G. 186.)

[*Remark.*—Each member's time for this may be limited by a previous vote of the court.]

113. *Pending the trial* of a cause, any member of the court who shall express his opinion of its merits to either, or to any person not a member of the court, or who shall absent himself from any sitting of the court without the permission of the court, or satisfactory reasons rendered, shall be thereby disqualified from taking part in the subsequent proceedings. (F. G. 188.)

114. *It is incumbent upon every member* of a court of Jesus Christ engaged in a trial of offenders to bear in mind the inspired injunction: "If any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." (F. G. 172.)

115. *A member of the court* shall not be disqualified from sitting as judge by having given testimony in the cause. (F. G. 216.)

A member of the court employed as counsel for the accused shall not be allowed to sit in judgment in the cause. (F. G. 190.)

The judicial committee shall be entitled to sit and vote as members of the court (F. G. 182.)

The Moderator should vote with the other members. (See Art. 389 (18).)

[*Remark.*—But a Moderator invited by the Session to preside should not, even in case of a tie, vote. He is Moderator by courtesy only. (1886.) The reason seems to be that he is not elected by the people to rule that congregation.]

The prosecutor should not vote, being in the position of a party. (Art. 83, 84, 393 (45).)

[*Remark.*— *Where there are several charges* the vote should be taken on each one separately. This will prevent confusion in case of appeal or complaint.]

116. *The decision* shall be made and judgment entered on the record. (F. G. 186; see Art. 118–120; Minutes of the trial; see Art. 232.)

117. *Confession.*—When any person shall come forward and make his offence known to the court, a full statement of the facts shall be recorded, and judgment rendered without process. (F. G. 234.)

118. [*Remark.*—*A minute* should be adopted setting forth the finding of the court expressing its judgment in the case. This is the practice of the superior courts, and should be of the Sessions also. It would be well if the facts and the legal or moral effect of these, where possible, be separately stated, which would make the matter clearer in many cases, should there be an appeal or complaint.]

119. *New trial.*—If, after a trial before any court, new testimony be discovered which is supposed to be highly important to the exculpation of the accused, it is proper for him to ask, and the court to grant, a new trial. (F. G. 218.)

120. *Sentence.*—May be arrested by appeal. See Art. 224. The only penalty which can be inflicted by a church court is that of ecclesiastical censure.

(*a*), Ecclesiastical censures are and ought to be suited to the nature of the offence.

(*b*), For private offences the censure should be administered in the presence of the court alone or privately by one or more members on its behalf.

(*c*), But for public offences censures should be administered in open Session or publicly announced to the church.

(*d*), When there are peculiar and special reasons the court may visit public offences not very gross in their character with private admonition or with definite suspension in private.

(*e*), But the censure of indefinite suspension should be ordinarily announced to the church.

(*f*), Whilst those of excommunication and deposition should either be administered before the church or else announced to it at the discretion of the court. (F. G. 220.)

121. *When any member or church officer* shall be guilty of a fault deserving censure, the court shall proceed with all tenderness, and shall deal with its offending brother in the spirit of meekness, the members considering themselves lest they also be tempted. (F. G. 221.)

122. *The censures which may be inflicted* by church courts are Admonition, Suspension, Excommunication, Deposition. (F. G. 156.)

123. *Admonition* is the formal reproof of an offender by a church court, warning him of his guilt and danger, and exhorting him to be more watchful and circumspect in the future. (F. G. 157.)

124. *It ought to be administered in private* by one or more members when the offence is aggravated and only known to a few. When the scandal is public the admonition shall be administered by the Moderator in the presence of the court, and ordinarily shall also be announced in public. (F. G. 222.)

When there are peculiar and special reasons, the court may visit public offences, not very gross in their character, with private admonition. (F. G. 220.)

125. *This censure terminates* when it is inflicted, and the party is not under any disability and may receive a letter subsequently in good and regular standing. (1881, J.)

Second or next higher grade of censure is

126. *Suspension*, with respect to church members, is their temporary exclusion from sealing ordinances; with respect to church officers, it is their temporary exclusion from the exercise of their offices. It may be definite or indefinite as to its duration. (F. G. 158.)

127. *Definite suspension* is administered when the credit of religion, the honor of Christ and the good of the offender demands it, even though he may have given satisfaction to the court. (F. G. 158.)

128. *Indefinite suspension* is the exclusion of an offender from sealing ordinances, or from his office, until he exhibits signs of repentance, or until, by his conduct, the necessity of the highest censure be made manifest. (F. G. 158.)

129. A suspended member cannot present his children for baptism. (Hodge's Presbyterian Law, 85.)

[*Remark.*—This must be because during the suspension he is in the position of one out of the church. But see Art. 152.]

130. *Definite suspension*, being an exemplary censure, ought ordinarily to be administered in open session or announced to the church. (F. G. 223.) But for offences not very gross may be administered in private. See Art. 120 (*d*).

131. *The sentence of indefinite suspension* ought to be inflicted with great solemnity, that it may be the means of impressing the mind of the delinquent with a proper sense of his danger while he stands excluded from the sacraments of the church of the living God, and that with the divine blessings it may lead him to repentance. When the court has resolved to pass this sentence, the Moderator shall address the offending brother to the following purpose:

132. *Form.*—"Whereas, you, A. B. (ruling elder, deacon, minister, or private member), are convicted by sufficient proof (or are guilty by your own confession) of the sin of (here insert the offence), we, the Presbytery (or church session) of C. D., in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, do now declare you suspended from the sacraments of the church (and from the exercise of your office) until you give satisfactory evidence of repentance."

To this shall be added such advice and admonition as shall be judged necessary, and the whole shall be followed with prayer to Almighty God that he would follow this act of discipline with his blessing. (F. G. 224.)

133. *Effect of suspension.*—If a church officer be suspended from sealing ordinances it necessarily carries with it suspension from the office, since it is incompatible for a non-communicant to exercise an office in the church. See Art. 135.

Suspension from office does not include debarring from the communion table. One may be fit to approach the Lord's table, and yet not fit to be an officer. See Removal of Censures. Art. 142, etc.

134. The fourth censure is that of deposition from office

Deposition is the degradation of an officer from his office, and may or may not be accompanied with the infliction of other censure. (F. G. 160.)

135. *Deposition* is a higher censure than that of suspension with respect to an officer. Suspension of an officer is a temporary exclusion from the office, and the court may restore him to the same standing and rights which he before possessed. But in deposition the elder or deacon must be re-elected by the church before he can exercise the functions of his office. See Art. 149.

If a minister is deposed, his pulpit must be declared vacant—he is not a Christian in good standing. (1821). But in suspension, this is discretionary with the court. See Art. 337. His name is to be kept on the roll. (1821.)

136. *Form of deposition.*—Whereas A. B., a minister of this Presbytery, or a ruling elder, or a deacon of this church, has been proved by sufficient evidence to be guilty of the sin of ——, we, the Presbytery or church Session of ——, do adjudge him totally disqualified for the office of the Christian ministry, or elder-

ship, or deaconship; therefore, we do hereby, in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, depose from the office of a Christian minister, or elder, or deacon, the said A. B., and do prohibit him from exercising any of the functions thereof.

If the sentence includes suspension or excommunication, the Moderator shall proceed to say: We do, moreover, by the same authority, suspend the said A. B. from the sacraments of the church until he shall exhibit satisfactory evidence of sincere repentance (or exclude the said A. B. from the sacraments of the church and cut him off from the fellowship of the church). The sentence of deposition ought to be inflicted with the same solemnities similar to those prescribed in case of excommunication. (F. G. 226.)

The causes which provoke deposition are almost always such as to involve the propriety of exclusion from the sacraments; yet the two sentences are not essentially the same, the one having reference to office, the other to rights of membership. (1848.)

Should he be reordained? See Art. 33, 34, 148, 149 and 344.

137. *The highest censure is that of excommunication*

Excommunication is the excision of an offender from the communion of the church. This censure is to be inflicted only on account of gross crime or heresy when the offender shows himself incorrigible and contumacious.

The design of this censure is to operate on the offender as a means of reclaiming him, to deliver the church from the scandal of his offence, and to inspire all with fear by the example of his discipline. (F. G. 159.)

138. *When the sentence of excommunication* is passed regularly, the Moderator of the Session shall make a public statement before the church of the several steps which have been taken with respect to their offending brother, and inform them that it has been found necessary to cut him off from the communion of the church. He shall then show the authority of the church to cast out unworthy members (Matt. xviii. 15–18, and 1 Cor. v.), and shall explain the nature, use and consequences of this censure, warning the people that they are to conduct themselves in all their intercourse with him as is proper towards one who is under the heaviest censure of the church. He shall then pronounce sentence to the following effect:

139. *Form.*—Whereas A. B., a member of this church, has been, by sufficient evidence, convicted of the sin of ——, and, after much admonition and prayer, obstinately refuses to hear the church, and has manifested no evidence of repentance; therefore, in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, we, the Session of the church of ——, do pronounce him to be excluded from the sacraments, and cut off from the fellowship of the church.

After which prayer shall be made that the blessing of God may follow this ordinance for the conviction and reformation of the excommunicated, and for the establishment of all believers. (F. G. 225.)

140. *When a lower censure* fails to reclaim the delinquent it may become the duty of court to proceed to the infliction of a higher censure. (F. G. 156.)

141. *An excommunicated member* is not, when restored, to be rebaptized. (1881, North.)

THE RESTORATION OF THOSE UNDER CENSURE.

142. *Church censures may be removed*, (1), by the court inflicting the same upon repentance of the party; (2), by order of a superior court, under appeal or complaint.

After any person has been suspended from the sacraments, it is proper that the rulers of the church should frequently converse with him as well as pray with him and for him, that it would please God to give him repentance. (F. G. 227.)

143. *When the court shall be satisfied* as to the reality of the repentance of a suspended offender, he shall be admitted to profess his repentance (see Art. 150), either in the presence of the court alone, or publicly, and be restored to the sacraments of the church and to his office, if such be the judgment of the court, which restoration shall be declared to the penitent in words of the following import:

144. *Form of restoration.*—Whereas you, A. B., have been debarred from the sacraments of the church (and from the office of the gospel ministry, or eldership, or deaconship), but have now manifested such repentance as satisfied the church, we the Session (or Presbytery) of C D., do hereby, in the name and the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, absolve you from the said sentence of suspension, and do restore you to the full enjoyment of sealing ordinances (and the exercise of your office and all the functions thereof).

After which there shall be prayer and thanksgiving. (F. G. 228.)

145. *When an excommunicated person* shall be so affected with his state as to be brought to repentance, and to desire to be readmitted to the communion of the church, the Session, having obtained sufficient evidence of his sincere penitence, shall proceed to restore him; in order to which the presiding minister shall inform the church of the measures which have been taken with the excommunicated person, and of the resolution of the Session to restore him. (F. G. 229.)

146. *On the day appointed for his restoration*, the minister shall call upon the excommunicated person and propose to him in the presence of the congregation the following questions:

Do you, from a deep sense of your great wickedness, freely confess your sin in thus re-

belling against God and refusing to hear his church, and do you acknowledge that you have been in justice and mercy cut off from the communion of the church? Answer, I do.

Do you now voluntarily profess your sincere repentance and contrition for your sin and obstinacy, and do you humbly ask the forgiveness of God and his church? Answer, I do.

Do you sincerely promise, through divine grace, to live in all humbleness of mind and circumspection, and to endeavor to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour by having your conversation as becometh the gospel? Answer, I do.

Here the minister shall give the penitent a suitable exhortation, encouraging him and comforting him. Then he shall pronounce the sentence of restoration in the following words:

Whereas you, A. B., have been shut out from the communion of the church, but have now manifested such repentance as satisfies the church; in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by his authority, we, the Session of this church, do declare you absolved from the sentence of excommunication formerly denounced against you, and we do restore you to the communion of the church, that you may be a partaker of all the benefits of the Lord Jesus to your eternal salvation.

The whole shall be concluded with prayer and thanksgiving. (F. G. 229.)

147. *The restoration of a deposed officer,* after public confession has been made in a

manner similar to that prescribed in the case of the removal of censure from an excommunicated person, shall be announced to him by the Moderator in the following form:

148. *Form*—Whereas you, A. B., formerly a minister of this Presbytery (or a ruling elder, or deacon of this church), have been deposed from your office, but have now manifested such repentance as satisfies the church; in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by his authority, we, the Presbytery of C. D. (or the Session of this church), do declare you absolved from the said sentence of deposition formerly pronounced against you; and we do furthermore restore you to your said office and to the exercise of all the functions whenever you may be orderly called thereto. See Art. 149.

After which there shall be prayer and thanksgiving, and the members of the court shall extend to him the right hand of fellowship. (F. G. 230.)

149. *When a deposed elder or deacon has been absolved* from the censure of deposition, he cannot be allowed to resume the exercise of his office in the church without re-election by the people. (F. G. 231.)

[*Remark.*—This implies that he is not to be reordained.]

150. *When a person under censure shall remove* to a part of the country remote from the court by which he was sentenced, and shall desire to profess repentence and obtain restora-

tion, it shall be lawful for the court, if it deem it expedient, to transmit a certified copy of its proceedings to the Session or Presbytery where the delinquent resides, which shall take up the case and proceed with it as if it had originated with itself. (F. G. 232. See Art. 143, 173, 343.)

151. *The Session* is to see that parents do not neglect to present their children for baptism. (F. G. 67.)

152. *The infants* of one or both believing parents are to be baptized. (C. F. 28, § 4.)

One or both the parents must be members of the church. (1843.)

It is an infraction of our standard for a minister to baptize the children of non-professors. (1869.)

The baptism of children of suspended members is within the discretion of the Session. (1870. See Art. 129.)

Heathen infants may be baptized where they are committed to the entire care of the mission, and have not reached the age of discretion. (1843.)

Parents refusing to present their children for baptism are not on that ground to be excluded from the church, but in receiving such parents as members the Session is to judge of the expediency thereof. (1834.)

Baptism is not to be unnecessarily delayed. (D. W. 9, 1.)

The Session is to be the judge as to what age infant baptism is to be extended—there is no rule. (1822.)

153. *Only a minister*, lawfully called thereunto, may administer baptism (C. F., ch. 28, sec. 2), and not by any private person in any case. (D. W. 6, sec. 2. See Art. 158.)

154. Although it is proper that baptism be administered in the presence of the congregation, yet there may be cases where it will be expedient to administer this ordinance in private houses, of which the minister is to be the judge. (D. W. 9.)

155. *Form of Baptism.*—After previous notice is given to the minister, the child to be baptized is to be presented by one or both of the parents, signifying their desire that the child be baptized.

Before baptism let the minister use some words of instruction respecting the institution, use and ends of this ordinance, showing that it is instituted by Christ; that it is a seal of righteousness of faith; that the seed of the faithful have no less a right to this ordinance, under the gospel, than the seed of Abraham to the circumcision, under the Old Testament; that Christ commanded all nations to be baptized; that he blessed little children, declaring that of such is the kingdom of heaven; that the promise of the gospel is to the believer and his house; that household baptism was practiced by the apostles; that we are by nature sinful, guilty, poluted, and have need of cleansing by the blood of Christ, and by the sanctifying influence of the Spirit of God.

The minister is also to exhort the parents to the careful performance of their duty, requiring that they teach the child to read the word of God, that they instruct it in the principles of our holy religion as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, an excellent summary of which we have in the Confession of Faith and in the Large and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly, which are to be recommended to them as adopted by the church for their direction and assistance in the discharge of this important duty; that they pray with and for it; that they set an example of piety and godliness before it, and endeavor by all the means of God's appointment to bring up their child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The minister may then propose the following or like questions:

(1), *Do you* acknowledge your child's need of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ and the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit?

(2), *Do you* claim God's covenant promises in his behalf, and do you look in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ for his salvation, as you do for your own?

(3), *Do you* now unreservedly dedicate your child to God, and promise in humble reliance upon divine grace that you will endeavor to set before him a godly example; that you will pray with and for him; that you will teach him the doctrines of our holy religion; and that you will strive by all the means of God's appointment to

bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

Then the minister is to pray for a blessing to attend this ordinance, after which, calling the child by name, he shall say: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

As he pronounces these words he is to baptize the child with water, by pouring or sprinkling it on the face of the child without any further ceremony, and the whole shall be concluded with prayer. (D. W. 9.)

SESSION DUTY—TO RECEIVE MEMBERS INTO COMMUNION OF THE CHURCH. (F. G. 67.)

156. [*Remark.*—This belongs exclusively to the Session. The Form of Government makes no other provision for it, except in the organization of a church, or possibly by an evangelist.]

Those only who have made a profession of faith in Christ are entitled to all the rights and privileges of the church. (F. G. 31.)

157. *The Session is the judge* of the qualification of the applicant, and as to how far dissent to the doctrines of the church may be permitted, also as to the expediency of receiving those who indulge in worldly amusements which are condemned by the church. (1864, North.) See Art. 63, 152.

158. *The validity of baptism* administered by a minister of the Campbellite or Christian

church is to be decided by the Presbyteries and Sessions interested. The absence of creed and uniformity in that church renders it impracticable to lay down a rule of universal application. (1882.)

Baptism administered by a Catholic priest is invalid, and an applicant baptized by such must be rebaptized. (1884.) So also of those baptized by Swedenborgians. (1894.)

159. *Expediency of receiving* vendors of spirituous liquors is to be decided by Session, each case to stand upon its merits. No general rule, but the business is to be disapproved of. (R. 1878.) The Assembly declares it a great evil, and urges all lawful means of banishing it. (1886.)

Universalists are not to be received (1794), nor duellists, except upon repentance (1805), nor those who carry on secular occupations on the Lord's day, except such as are required by mercy and necessity. (1819.)

[*Remark.*—Would it be lawful to reject an applicant for acts performed by him or views maintained when the same things are being done or views maintained by members of the church without discipline being applied? Yes, it might be inexpedient to apply discipline to the members and thus exterminate the error, and prudence might forbid that; yet, the same prudence would require a checking of the evil in refusing to allow an increase by admitting others into the fold, as it would certainly increase the difficulty of eliminating it.]

The time when young persons come to years of discretion cannot be precisely fixed. This must be left to the prudence of the officers of the church, whose office it is to judge, after careful examination of the qualifications of those who apply for admission to sealing ordinances. (D. W. X., 2.)

160. *Whenever unbaptized persons* apply for admission into the church, they shall, in ordinary cases, after giving satisfaction as to their knowledge and piety, make a public profession of faith in the presence of the congregation, and thereupon be baptized. (D. W. X., 3.)

Dipping the person into water is not necessary, but baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person. (C. F. xxviii., 3.)

For a Presbyterian minister to baptize by immersion is such a departure from the ways approved in our standards as should be discouraged. (1872.)

Immersion is not scriptural as to its mode, but the irregularity does not invalidate. (1894.)

Public Profession.—It is recommended as edifying and proper that baptized persons, when admitted by the Session to the Lord's supper, make a public profession of their faith in the presence of the congregation, but in all cases there should be a clear recognition of their previous relation to the church as baptized members.

The time having come for the making of a public profession, and those who have been ap-

proved by the Session having taken their places in the presence of the congregation, the minister may state that of the number of those who were baptized in infancy as members of the church of God by birthright and heirs of the covenant promises, and who were then dedicated to God by their parents in solemn vows, the Session has examined and approved as to (their) faith in Christ, and knowledge to discern the Lord's body. A., B. and C, who come now to assume for (themselves) the full privileges and responsibilities of (their) inheritance in the household of faith.

If there be present any candidates for baptism, the minister may state that: As applicants for admission into the church of God by baptism, which is a sign and seal of our engrafting into Christ, and of our engagement to be the Lord's, the Session has examined and approved as to (their) personal experience of divine grace, and (their) acceptance of Christ, D. E. and F., who (are) cordially welcomed into the goodly fellowship of the saints. The minister may then address those making a profession in the following terms:

(All of) you being here present to make a public profession of faith, are to assent to the following declaration and promises, by which you enter into a solemn covenant with God and his church:

Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving his displeasure, and without hope in his sovereign mercy?

Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered in the gospel?

Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to walk as becometh a follower of Christ, forsaking all sin and conforming your life to his teaching and example?

Do you submit yourself to the government and discipline of the church, and promise to study its purity and peace?

The minister may now briefly admonish those making a profession of faith as to the importance of the solemn obligations they have assumed; then baptism may be administered if there be present any candidates for the ordinance; and the whole concluded with prayer.

[*Remark.*—The above does not apply to those received by letter.]

161. *The membership* begins from the time of the Session's act, but not before baptism. (C. F., but see Hodge.)

It would be right and proper that the hand of fellowship and usual words of recognition in the case of an unbaptized member be delayed until the rite is administered. (1867, North.)

162. *Receiving members from other churches.* —When any member shall remove from one church to another, he shall produce satisfactory testimonials of his church membership and dismission before he be admitted as a regular

member of that congregation, unless the church Session has other satisfactory means of information. (F. G. 276.)

The word "church," as used above, means a particular church of this denomination. (1884, R. C.)

163. *No certificate of dismission* from either a Session or a Presbytery shall be valid testimony of good standing for a longer period than one year, unless its earlier presentation be hindered by some providential cause; and such certificates given to persons who have left the bounds of the Session or Presbytery granting them shall certify to the standing of such persons only to the time of their leaving those bounds. (F. G. 281.)

164. *Receiving members from other denominations,* Session should conform to the same usage as in receiving from other churches of our own denomination. (1884.)

When members are received from other churches by letters of dismission, their names are to be announced to the congregation with a recommendation of them to its Christian confidence and affection. (D. W. X. 6.)

SESSION'S DUTY TO GRANT LETTERS OF DISMISSION TO OTHER CHURCHES, WHICH, WHEN GIVEN TO PARENTS, SHALL ALWAYS INCLUDE THE NAMES OF THEIR BAPTIZED CHILDREN. (F. G. 67, 175.)

165. *When a church member or officer* shall remove his residence beyond the bounds of the court to whose jurisdiction he belongs into

the bounds of another, if he shall neglect for twelve months, without satisfactory reason given to both these courts, to transfer his ecclesiastical relations, the court whose bounds he has left shall be required to transfer them. (F. G. 277.)

166. *And should that court neglect this duty*, the one into whose bounds he has removed shall assume jurisdiction, giving due notice to the other body. (F. G. 277.)

167. *It is the uniform usage* to grant letters to other denominations, but a member cannot demand it as a legal right. (J., 1881.)

168. *If a Session persists in refusing to give a letter*, when ordered by Presbytery, it may be granted by the clerk of the Presbytery under its order. (1878, North.)

169. *An admonished member* is entitled to a letter in good and regular standing. (J., 1881.)

170. *So also a suspended member* is, if restored by order of a superior court. (1849.)

171. *Wilful absence from the ordinances* of the church warrants the omission of the words "in good and regular standing," and the insertion in the letter of a statement of such absence. (1864.)

172. *A party against whom there are no charges preferred* is entitled to a regular letter. It is left to the sound discretion of the Session as to the propriety of tabling charges. (1861.)

173. *A suspended member* removing may be dismissed, the letter stating the case, but the Session to whom he is dismissed shall in no event review the case. (1849. But see Art. 150.)

Paragraph 277 (Art. 165) does not apply to a minister irrespective of the work in which he may be engaged. (1893.)

174. *If the residence* of a communicating member be unknown for three years, he shall be retired upon a separate roll until he shall appear and give satisfaction, of which due record shall be made. (F. G. 276. See Art. 22.)

175. *Members of one church* dismissed to join another shall be held to be under the jurisdiction of the church dismissing them until they form a regular connection with that to which they have been dismissed. (F. G. 278.)

CERTIFICATE OF DISMISSION.

This is to certify, That —— is a member in full communion and good standing in the —— Presbyterian Church of ——. and that —— is hereby dismissed at —— own request, and affectionately recommended to the fellowship of the Presbyterian Church of ——, or of any other church in our communion, with which God in his providence may order ——, and when so received —— special relation to this church will cease. By order of the Session.

—— —— Moderator.

Given at ———

——— 189—.

176. *When a member or officer* shall renounce the communion of this church by joining

some other evangelical church, if in good standing, the irregularity shall be recorded, and his name erased; but if charges are pending against him they shall be communicated to the church which he has joined. (F. G. 237.)

If the denomination be heretical, an officer shall have his name stricken from the roll, and all authority to exercise his office derived from this church shall be withdrawn from him, but a private member shall not be otherwise noticed than as above prescribed. (F. G. 237.)

177. *When any communicating member* shall confess before the Session an unregenerated heart, and there is no evidence of other offence, the court may transfer his name to the roll of non-communicating members, and he shall be faithfully warned of his guilt in disobeying the gospel and encouraged to seek the redemption freely offered in Christ, and a statement shall be made to the church; but this action shall not be taken until the Church Session has ascertained, after mature inquiry and due delay, that this confession does not result from satanic temptation, or transient darkness of spirit.

This rule, however, shall not apply to those who wilfully absent themselves from the Lord's table, which is always an offence. (F. G. 235.)

[*Remark.*—The name cannot be stricken from the roll simply at the request of the party, because the covenant is made with Christ, and is unlimited as to time, and the church has power to receive it, but no power to annul, ex-

cept for gross violation of duty and covenant engagements. It finds its analogy in the covenant of matrimony, which the church may celebrate, but cannot annul except for gross violation of the covenant obligation.]

SESSION TO ORDAIN AND INSTALL RULING ELDERS AND DEACONS UPON THEIR ELECTION BY THE CHURCH, AND TO REQUIRE THESE OFFICERS TO DEVOTE THEMSELVES TO THEIR WORK. (F. G. 67.) See Art. 340, 341.

178. *They may not be required* to stand an examination for ordination, but Session must faithfully instruct them before ordaining. (1892.)

179. *Session's duties and powers* to examine the records of the proceedings of the Deacons. (F. G. 67.) A complete account of collections and distributions, and full record of proceedings shall be kept by the Deacons and submitted to the Session for examination and approval at least once a year. (F. G. 49.)

The collection and distribution of the offerings of the people for pious uses is to be performed by the Deacons under the direction of the Session. (F. G. 47.)

This includes all funds for benevolent and for local purposes. (1877, 1890)

180. *Where there are no Deacons* their duties devolve upon the Ruling Elders. (Art. 39.)

181. *Deaconess.*—Where it shall appear needful, the church Session may select and appoint

godly women for the care of the sick, of prisoners, of poor widows and orphans, and in general for the relief of distress. (F. G. 51.)

182. *Congregations have the right* to appoint and remove, at will, trustees to take and hold property, and the congregation, if constitutionally convened for the purpose, may authorize the mortgaging, exchanging, or making trust-deeds of said property by said trustees for repairing, building of church edifices, or other proper purposes. A part or all of the deacons should be selected as trustees if suitable. (1890.)

183. *Where property is held* by unincorporated churches it is advisable that deeds be made to trustees in all cases where it can be done. (1890.)

184. SESSION'S DUTY AND POWER—TO ESTABLISH AND CONTROL SABBATH-SCHOOLS AND BIBLE CLASSES, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH. (F. G. 67.) See Art. 190 and 197.

The church should make special provision for the instruction of its youth in the doctrines of the Bible as set forth in the Catechisms. Hence church Sessions ought to establish, under their own authority, Bible classes and Sabbath-schools for this object, or to adopt such other methods as shall secure the same end. (F. G. 148.)

185. *Sessions are urged* to establish schools of their own, instead of co-operating in union

schools, wherever it is practicable, and when not practicable, to co operate in union schools. (1881 and 1884.)

186. *The number of Presbyterian children* in union schools should be reported. (1879.)

187. *Sessions should establish schools* for the colored children where it is practicable. (1873.) Also, mission schools. (1893.)

188. *Should encourage* Sabbath-school conventions likewise. (1893.)

189. *The Sabbath-school* is but the more formal organization of catechetical classes, which have been known to the church in all ages. (1875.) It is not something apart from the church, but the church, old and young, studying the Bible. (1880.) It is simply an assistant to the parent in the religious instruction of his child. It is not adapted, and never was intended, to do the parent's work. The parent, therefore, cannot delegate to it his responsibility. (1870.)

The custom of persons leaving off attendance upon the Sabbath-school when they attain to maturity is not to be encouraged, and it is eminently desirable, as far as possible, that the whole congregation be engaged in Sabbath-school work, either as officers, teachers, scholars, or visitors. The formation of adult classes for the study of the Scriptures is earnestly commended. (D. W. 7, 4.)

190. *Control by the Session* means that the Session should appoint the superintendent,

who shall nominate, with its approbation, the teachers, ordain the methods of instruction, and direct the selection of books. (1871.) Our own standards and literature should be used, and the use of any other discouraged. (1880.) No sensational methods or literature should be employed. (1875.)

The Form of Government and Catechisms should be taught (1889), also the standards and hymnology of our church. (1875.)

Control by the Session extends to the minutest details and the prompt correction of any evil. (1874.)

191. *The superintendent should promptly open* the school at the appointed hour, and throughout the time allotted should have the general oversight of the classes, seeing that every class is supplied with a competent teacher, that proper behavior is maintained by the teachers and scholars, and endeavoring so to conduct the exercises as to give them spirit and attractiveness, and at the same time to preserve their devotional character. (D. W. 7, 2.)

192. *Teachers.*—Sessions should, as far as possible, secure the services of pious teachers. (1873.) The pastors, elders, and such persons as they may select and approve to assist are the divinely-appointed catechists or teachers, and the work should devolve upon them in every well-organized congregation. (1875.)

193. *It is the duty of teachers* to carefully prepare for their work by study, meditation

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and prayer, to speak to the unconverted among scholars on the subject of their personal salvation, to visit them in their homes, especially when they are in sickness or in trouble, and to pray for God's blessing upon them. It is of great importance that the teachers be in their places promptly at the opening of the school, and that they encourage punctuality on the part of their scholars. (D. W. 7, 3.)

194. *Sessions should require the officers and teachers* to meet together as often as practicable for prayer and conference upon the work, and that the Session meet with them in order to secure greater efficiency and a deeper sense of responsibility in the conversion of children and youth as the great object of Sabbath-school instruction. (1873, 1886, 1894.)

195. *Sessions, officers and teachers* of Sabbath-schools are urged to co-operate with the efforts of the American Bible Society in their effort to have each child that can read own a copy of the Bible. (1892, 1893.)

They should insist upon the pupils using the Bible in the study of the lesson and in the class. (1886.)

196. *The exercises appropriate to the Sabbath-school* are prayer, singing praises to God, the study of the Holy Scriptures, the Confession of Faith, together with the Catechisms of the church and the Book of Church Order, and offerings for religious purposes, especially the work of missions, but its work must not be al-

lowed to interfere with the attendance upon the regular public worship of the Lord's day, on the one hand, or with parental instruction on the other; and the school is always to be under the supervision and control of the Session. (D. W. 7. See Art. 189, 190.)

197. *Whether collections shall be taken up* in the Sabbath-school or not is left to the discretion of the Session. (1885.)

198. SESSION'S DUTY TO ORDER COLLECTIONS FOR PIOUS USES. (F. G. 67.)

When the Lord's supper is celebrated it should be done. (D. W.)

Sessions are urged to take up collections weekly where practicable. (1863, 1878.)

The injunction of the Assembly ordering collections for specified causes and at or near specified times are of binding obligations upon the Sessions, and the Sessions are required to report in writing the reason for any delinquency therein. (1875.) But this does not trench upon the members' private judgment and liberty in giving. It simply secures the opportunity. (1875.)

Presbytery must call upon the representative to give the reason for any failure to contribute to any cause in open session. (1888.)

[*Remark.*—The same principle was insisted upon as early as 1700. (Hodge's *Hist. Pres. Church*, p. 228.)

The courts are not separate and independent tribunals, but they have a mutual relation, and every act of jurisdiction is the act of the whole

church, performed by it through the appropriate organ. The Assembly is to concert measures for promoting the enlargement and prosperity of the church. (F. G. 90.)

[*Remark.*—If the Sessions can refuse to take up the collections directed by the Assembly, this would amount to an annulling of the Assembly's power in this paragraph.]

Courts possess all administrative authority necessary to give effect to their power. (F. G. 50.)

199. *Every member ought to contribute* according as God has prospered him for the support of the gospel, and upon his habitual failure herein, it is the duty of the Session to counsel with him, and, if need be, faithfully admonish him of his sinful neglect. (1874.)

The tithe is suggestive and useful in matters of Christian giving, and proportionate giving is binding upon the conscience of God's people. (1891.)

Concerts, suppers, etc.—Assembly advises against the use of such means to secure money to be used in the Master's work. This advice is given because we believe that the Lord has ordained that giving should be an act of worship, and thus a means of grace. (1888.)

200. SESSION TO TAKE THE OVERSIGHT OF THE SINGING IN THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD. (F. G. 67.)

It is the duty of Christians to praise God by singing psalms or hymns publicly in the

church, as also privately in the family. In singing the praises of God we are to sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also, making melody in our hearts unto the Lord. It is also proper that we cultivate some knowledge of the rules of music, that we may praise God in a becoming manner with our voices as well as with our hearts. The whole congregation should be furnished with books, and ought to join in this part of worship. The proportion of the time of public worship to be spent in singing is left to the prudence of every minister, and it is recommended that this part of divine service be conducted in such manner as to encourage congregational singing. (D. W. 4.)

201. SESSION IS TO CONCERT THE BEST MEASURES FOR PROMOTING THE SPIRITUAL INTERESTS OF THE CHURCH AND CONGREGATION. (F. G. 67.)

It is expedient that no person be introduced to preach in any of the churches under our care without the consent of the pastor or the church Session, unless sent by the Presbytery. (D. W. 6.)

The use of the church should not be granted to Universalists. (1891.)

Women should not be allowed to speak publicly in any meetings of the congregation by way of exhortation, or prayer, or discussing any question in a mixed assembly. This is according to the mind of the spirit in 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35; 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12. But this does not prohibit them from holding meetings among

themselves for prayer and Christian conversation, and devising ways and means for aiding in branches of church work. (1891.)

The Session may order meetings of the congregation for other purposes than that of electing officers and dissolving of pastoral relation where the Session deem it proper and desirable, and the congregation may, in such case, elect a presiding officer, where the subject to be considered is such that the pastor is prevented from motives of delicacy from presiding. (1876. Art. 392.)

If exceptions be taken to ruling of Moderator, they must be decided by Presbytery, not by the congregation.—*Pardovan's Collections.*

Nothing in the Form of Government prohibits the congregation from inviting an elder outside their own Session to moderate a congregational meeting, but this is inexpedient except in extraordinary cases. (1890.)

The deacons have no right to call congregational meetings.

As to the clerk and records, see Art. 55.

202. *Young People's Societies.*—In view of the varying condition of our different churches, the Assembly does not deem it wise at present to prescribe any particular form of organization or method of work, but enjoins upon Sessions that in conducting and forming such organizations the following principles should be carefully observed:

1. Such societies should in all cases be organized under the supervision of their respec-

tive Sessions. They should be kept under the exclusive control of the Sessions and required to submit to them annual reports of their work.

2. While the Assembly does not forbid affiliation for certain purposes between societies of our church and those of other evangelical bodies, yet it enjoins upon Sessions to maintain a careful oversight of the nature and influence of such association, and in the exercise of their discretion to guard their young people against influences and teachings which are inconsistent with the principles of our own church. The Assembly would utter a special warning against the danger to which young and inexperienced persons are exposed from attendance upon large and promiscuous conventions which are not under ecclesiastical control.

3. In societies which are constituted of both sexes, Sessions should take care that the women and girls do not transgress the limitations of Scripture by conducting meetings or by engaging in public prayer and exhortation.

4. Should the number of societies in any Presbytery make it desirable that they should come into relation with each other for the purpose of conference or co-operation, such association should always be within presbyterial lines and under presbyterial control.

5. Sessions are advised to cultivate close and sympathetic relations with the societies under their care; to attend their meetings frequently and to encourage other adult members of the church to such attendance; to guard against a

hurtful separation between the old and young in religious worship and work, and to forestall any tendency on the part of the young people to give preference to their own meetings over the stated services of the church. (1894.)

[*Remark.*— *The Session* ought to have some systematic plan of visiting the flock officially at least once a year. This might be done by committees of the elders. The elders ought to know each member of the flock personally.]

203. *The Session should assemble the people for worship* where there is no minister. (F. G. 67.)

Churches destitute of official ministration of the word ought not, therefore, to forsake the assembling of themselves together, but should be convened by the Session on the Lord's day and at other suitable times for prayer, praise, the reading of the Holy Scriptures and exhortation, or the reading of a sermon of some approved minister. In like manner Christians whose lot is cast in destitute regions ought to meet for the worship of God. (F. G. 25.)

204. SESSIONS ARE TO OBSERVE AND CARRY OUT THE LAWFUL INJUNCTIONS OF THE HIGHER COURTS. (F. G. 67.)

Such as the decisions of higher courts in appeals and complaints, review and control, reports, etc.

Must report to Presbytery all aid given to candidates by the church or any societies. (1894.)

[*Remark.*—The Session must send up a narrative to each regular meeting of the Presbytery. These narratives must show the religious condition of the church for the year. They furnish the basis of the Presbytery's narrative to the Assembly and the Synod respectively. The spring narrative embraces the period of time from April to April; the fall narrative from October to October.]

Let the narrative embrace the following topics:

NARRATIVE OF THE SESSION FOR ——— CHURCH.

For the year ending April ——, 189—.

1. Attendance on the services of the sanctuary by members and by others.
2. The observance of family worship.
3. The observance of the Lord's day by members.
4. The training of children and youth in the home and Sabbath-school in the Scriptures and Catechisms of the church.
5. Fidelity of God's people in worshipping the Lord with their substance, in giving to the support and extension of the gospel.
6. Has your church paid its minister fully and promptly the amount promised him?
7. Have there been any special evidences of spiritual life, and growth, and activity among your people?
8. Does worldly conformity prevail among church members?
9. Is your church engaged in any evangelistic work outside your own congregation?

[*Remark.*—Narratives should be adopted by Session and recorded. This is the law for higher courts, and some Presbyteries require it of Sessions.]

205. SESSION SHALL APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO PRESBYTERY AND SYNOD, who shall on their return make report of their diligence. (F. G. 67.)

This representative may be required to report on more than his diligence. (1887.) Cannot be instructed how to vote on cases pending in higher court. (1884, R. and C.)

His appointment holds good from one regular meeting to the next, unless sooner revoked by Session. (1888.)

The representative to Synod cannot sit in an adjourned meeting of Presbytery, unless so directed by Session.

The expenses of ministers and ruling elders in their attendance on church courts shall be defrayed by the bodies they represent. (F. G. 58.)

206. *Every Session shall keep a fair record* of the proceedings, which record shall be at least once in every year submitted to the inspection of the Presbytery. (F. G. 69.)

Should contain narratives and statistical reports. (Art. 204)

DISSENTS AND PROTESTS.

207. *A dissent* is a declaration on the part of one or more members of a minority in a court, expressing a different opinion from that of the majority in a particular case. (F. G. 272.)

Shall be entered on the records of the court, if unaccompanied with reasons. (*Ibid.*)

If accompanied with reasons it is virtually a protest. (1872, North.)

208. *A protest* is a more solemn and formal declaration by members of a minority, bearing their testimony against what they deem a mischievous or erroneous judgment, and is generally accompanied with a detail of the reasons on which it is founded. (F. G. 273.)

209. *It must be made before* the rising of the court at which the decision protested against was made. (1822, 1875.)

210. *None can join in a protest* against a decision of any court except those who had a right to vote in the case. (F. G. 275.)

Those who are not members may not protest, and if they do, their protest is simply to be returned. (O. S. 1867.)

211. *Protests are to be entered* only against the action of a court with which the protestant's conscience is offended, and not against any member or members, nor to facts assumed. (1758.)

212. It should give the reasons upon which it is founded, but should not contain answers to arguments of the individual debators. (1844.)

213. *If a protest or dissent* be couched in temperate language and be respectful to the court, it shall be recorded, and the court may, if deemed necessary, put an answer to the protest on record along with it. But here the

matter shall end, unless the protestants obtain leave of the court to withdraw their protest absolutely, or for the sake of amendment. (F. G. 274.)

REFERENCES.

214. A reference is a representation of a matter, not yet decided, made by an inferior to a superior court, which representation ought always to be in writing. (F. G. 247.)

215. *When a court makes a reference*, it ought to have all the testimony and other documents duly prepared, produced and in perfect readiness, so that the superior court may be able to fully consider and issue the case with as little difficulty or delay as possible. (F. G. 254.)

The Presbytery may itself take the testimony. (1858.)

216. *References by any court* are to be made to the court immediately superior. (F. G. 253.)

217. Subjects or cases which are new, important, difficult or of a peculiar delicacy, the decision of which may establish principles or precedents of extensive influence, on which the sentiments of the inferior court are greatly divided, or on which, for any reason, it is desirable that a superior court shall first decide, are proper subjects for reference. (F. G. 248.)

Although references may, in some cases, be proper, yet it is generally conducive to the good of the church that every court should fulfil its duty by exercising its judgment. (F. G. 251.)

218. *A judicial decision may be reviewed* by the court which pronounced it, after several years, although no new testimony be offered, the decision may be altered, as the views of the church may be changed on the question. But it is advisable to refer such a case. (1833.)

219. *References are either for mere advice* preparatory to a decision by the inferior court, . . . in which case the reference suspends its decision, or for ultimate decision by the superior court, in which case the whole matter is submitted. (F. G. 249 and 250 combined.)

A reference ought generally to procure advice from the superior court, yet that court is not bound to give a final judgment, but may remit the whole case either with or without advice to the court by which it was referred. (F. G. 252.)

220. *By a reference of a case* the lower court loses jurisdiction until it is sent back. (1863, North.)

221. *Where a lower court*, by request of accused, referred a case to a superior court for decision, and in obedience to the order of the superior court inflicted the censure of admonition, and then complained against the superior court that the censure was disproportionate to the offence, the complaint was dismissed. (J., 1884.)

222. *Church censures may be removed* by court inflicting it, upon repentance of the offender. See Art. 143, 150.

Or the censures may be removed by order of a superior court, under appeal or complaint.

APPEAL.

223. *An appeal* is the removal of a cause already decided from an inferior to a superior court. . . . It shall not be carried to any other court than the one immediately superior, without its consent. (F. G. 255, 259.)

224. *The effect of an appeal* is to arrest sentence until the matter is finally decided. If the infliction of the sentence of suspension, by excommunication or deposition, be arrested by appeal, the judgment appealed from shall nevertheless be considered as in force until the appeal shall be issued. (F. G. 255 and 256.)

225. *Appeal is allowable* only after judgment has been rendered, and to the party against whom it has been rendered. (F. G. 255.) Those who have not submitted to a regular trial are not entitled to an appeal. (F. G. 256.)

In appellant courts the parties are known as appellant and appellee. (F. G. 163)

The party against whom decision was made is appellant, and the Presbyterian Church is appellee. (1889.) See Art. 230.

[*Remark.*—A party who has waived a formal trial, if aggrieved, has no remedy, unless some one else will complain.]

226. *Every appellant is bound to give notice* of his intention to appeal, and also to lay the

reasons thereof in writing before the court appealed from, either before its rising or within ten days thereafter. If this notice and reasons be not given to the court while in session, it shall be lodged with the Moderator or clerk. (F. G. 258.)

FORM OF APPEAL. (*Suggested.*)

The Presbyterian Church in the United States.

Session of the Church of (C. D.), Presbytery of ———, *vs.* (E. F.) as communicant or ruling elder or deacon.

Please take notice that the undersigned (E. F.) appellant appeals from the decision made in the above-named cause by your reverend body on the —— day of —— to the Presbytery (or next highest court); the grounds and reasons for so doing are set forth in the appeal hereto attached.

(Sign) ——— ———.

To the Session of the Church of (C. D.).

FORM. (*Suggested.*)

The Presbyterian Church in the United States.

Session of the Church of (C. D.), appellee, against (E. F.) communicant, ruling elder, or deacon, appellant.

To the Reverend (Presbytery of ———):

The appellant in the above-named cause hereby appeals from the decision made by (Session) above named on the following grounds:

1. Because the said Session committed irregularities in its proceedings, to-wit: (here give the particulars, indicating them by a, b, c, etc.) whereby injustice and hardship was wrought toward the appellant.

2. Because the said court manifested prejudice toward the appellant (here describe instances of it).

3. Because the finding of facts in the case by said court are not sustained by the evidence and are denied by appellant.

4. Because the said (Court ———) erred in its interpretation of the standards of the church and in its conclusions of law in the following particulars: x, y, z.

Wherefore the appellant prays that the said decisions of the said (Session of the Church of C. D.) be annulled, and that this appellant be restored to his former rights and privileges existing prior to said decision, and for such further relief as he may be entitled.

(Signed), ——— ———.

Dated ——— ———.

This must contain an endorsement of the Clerk or Moderator, acknowledging service within the time prescribed (ten days). A copy of this paper must be given to the Clerk or Moderator of the court appealed from.

It must also be placed in the hands of the Clerk or Moderator of the superior court on the second day of its session.

The spaces in the brackets are to be filled appropriate to the circumstances, etc.

227. *A copy of such notice* and reasons the appellant must also lodge with the clerk of the higher court before the close of the second day of its session. (F. G. 260.)

It must show evidence of having been served upon the inferior court. (1834.)

Where lodged on the third day it was held not in time and dismissed. (1863.) Again, on the fourth day. (1870 and 1872.)

Where an appeal was in the house, but failed to be lodged with the clerk on the second day through the ignorance of the party to whom it was intrusted, it was held a sufficient

compliance with the rule by the appellant. (1830.)

Where it was forwarded to the court in the care of a commissioner, but through the absence of said commissioner not presented, held a sufficient compliance to warrant a continuance. (1862.) So, also, where forwarded, through mistake of the place of sitting of the court, to the wrong place, and by such mistake failing to reach the court by the second day, it was continued. (*Ibid.*)

228. *If an appellant*, after entering his appeal to a superior court, fail to prosecute it, it shall be considered as abandoned, and the judgment appealed from shall be final, and appellant shall be considered as abandoning his appeal if he do not appear before the appellate court by the second day of its meeting next ensuing the date of his notice of appeal, unless it shall appear that he was prevented by the providence of God from seasonably prosecuting it. (F. G. 263.)

The appearance of appellant and appellee must be in person or by writing. (F. G. 260.) See Art. 227.

229. *Upon the non-appearance* of the appellant, without explanation, the case was dismissed. (Judicial Case, 1858.)

Sickness of appellant or in his family held good ground of continuance, but the sentence continued in force. (1851.)

230. *The form of appeal.*—Prior to the

constitution of 1821 no distinction was made between an appeal and a complaint.

[*Remark.*—The common form was, "We appeal and complain." The constitution of 1821 declared an appeal "to be the removal of a cause already decided from an inferior to a superior judicatory by a party aggrieved." This continued to be the law until 1879, and under the term "cause" all kinds of decisions were reviewed by appeal, which, probably under the present book, would be termed "a complaint."]

In many cases the misapplication of the term "appeal" or "complaint" has been corrected, and when the party termed his case "an appeal," which should have been termed "complaint," the correction was made by the court and the case decided. In many other cases, however, the misnomer was declared fatal and the case thrown out of court. Hence it is important to use the proper term. In the old Book of Discipline, prior to 1879, there was a paragraph, ch. vii., sec. 4, sub-division 3, which is as follows:

"The cases in which a complaint is advisable and proper are as follows: Where the judgment is favorable to the only party at the bar of the court, or the judgment in question may do no wrong to any individual or the party who is aggrieved by it may decline the trouble of conducting an appeal. In these cases no appeal is to be expected." etc. (Compare this with our book. Art. 239, 240.)

Under this old book the law was really much

clearer concerning appeals and complaint than now.

An appeal can only be taken by an original party who has been regularly tried; that is, under forms of process, and against whom the decision has been made. (Art. 225.) See Art. 83, 84.

A prosecutor, while an original party, representatively, is not on trial, neither could it be said that where he fails to secure the condemnation of the accused that a decision had been rendered against him. Therefore he could not appeal where he fails to secure the condemnation of the accused, but he should complain if he desires the matter reviewed by a superior court. See Art. 84.

The accused, on conviction, appealing, becomes the appellant. The church becomes the appellee (1893), and is represented by the prosecutor. See Art. 223, 225.

Where an accused is improperly acquitted, either in the original court or the appellate court, the remedy is always by complaint, which may be made by any member of the church. See old book quoted above and Art. 84.

If the appeal be, in the judgment of the appellant, improperly dismissed in an appellate court, the remedy for him is to appeal. It is the same case continued.

A complaint is in the nature of an original proceeding, the subject matter being brought over from another proceeding, but the parties being distinct therefrom. Hence, the com-

plainant and respondent (the court) are original parties, and the remedy for the respondent, if complaint be sustained, is to appeal, because the sustaining of complaint decides that the respondent court has done wrong, error or injustice, and orders it to do some act as reversal or which may be accompanied by censure also. This, therefore, is of the nature of a sentence vs. an original party.

But if the complaint is dismissed, the complainant, not being an accused party or a condemned party, if dissatisfied, must complain, and so if others be dissatisfied they must likewise complain. The prime question of a complaint in a judicial case is that the court did wrong, and the benefit accruing in the sustaining of the complaint to the individual judicially condemned enters into the case only incidentally.

In short, wherever there is an acquittal, either in original court or an appellate court, the matter, if carried up, must be by complaint, since the acquitted party drops out of the case nominally. Wherever there is a condemnation, whether of a court or individual, and such condemned (an original party) takes it up, it is by appeal; if others than the condemned carry it up, it is by complaint. See paragraph 248.

231. *The grounds of an appeal are:*

1. Any irregularity in the proceeding of an inferior court.

2. A refusal of reasonable indulgence to a party on trial.

3. Declining to receive important testimony.

4 Hurrying to a decision before the testimony is fully taken.

5. A manifestation of prejudice in the cause.

6. Mistake or injustice in the judgment. All are proper grounds of appeal. (F. G. 257.)

The appeal must not be general, but definite. (1875, North.)

It must allege error in doctrine or law. (1885, North.)

It must be couched in respectful language to the court.

232. *Minutes of the trial* shall be kept by the clerk, which shall exhibit, (1), the charge; (2), the answer; (3), all the testimony and all such acts, orders and decisions of the court relating to the cause as either party may desire, and also the judgment.

The clerk shall, without delay, attach together the charges, the answer, the citations and the returns thereto, and the minutes required to be kept. These papers, when so attached, shall constitute the "Record of the Cause."

When a cause is removed by appeal or complaint, the lower court shall transmit the "record" thus prepared to the higher court, with the addition of the notice of appeal or complaint, and the reasons thereof, if any, shall have been filed. (F. G. 189.)

These minutes must be recorded in the Minute Book. (N. S., 1862.)

233. *If any court shall neglect* to send up the record of the cause, especially if thereby an

appellant who has proceeded with regularity shall be deprived of the privilege of having his appeal seasonably tried, it shall be censured according to the circumstances of the case, and the judgment appealed from shall be suspended until the record be produced, upon which the issue can fairly be tried. (F. G. 266)

234. *The parties shall be allowed copies* of the whole proceedings at their own expense if they demand them. (F. G. 189.)

235. *In taking up an appeal*, after ascertaining that the appellant, on his part, has conducted it regularly,

THE FIRST STEP SHALL BE TO READ THE RECORD OF THE CAUSE. See 232. (F. G. 261.)

Nothing which is not contained in this record shall be taken into consideration in the higher court (F. G. 189.) See Art. 236.

But if, in the prosecution of an appeal, new testimony be offered, which in the judgment of the appellate court. has an important bearing on the case, it shall be competent for that court to refer the cause to the inferior court for a new trial, or, with the consent of the parties, to take the testimony and proceed with the cause. (F. G. 219.)

SECOND STEP—TO HEAR THE PARTIES.

First, the appellant.

The accused may be represented by any member of the court, who shall not sit in judgment on the case. (F. G. 190.)

Second, the appellee. See Art. 184, 225, 238.

In an appeal the court is not a party, and should not appoint a representative. (1883, J.)

[*Remark.*—Manifestly an error. The appellee is to appear, in person or by writing, 225; is one of the parties, 235, 228; the original prosecutor is a party, Art. 84, but he is appointed by the court, unless he volunteers, and if there be no voluntary prosecutor for the appellate court, the inferior court surely can appoint.]

Third, The appellant shall be heard in reply.

THIRD STEP—TO CALL THE ROLL,

That every member may express his opinion in the cause.

FOURTH STEP—TO TAKE THE VOTE.

(F. G. 261.)

When a matter is transferred in any of these ways (review and control, reference, appeal and complaint) from an inferior to a superior court, the members of the inferior court do not lose the right to sit and deliberate and vote in the superior court, except that either of the original parties may challenge the right of any member of the inferior court to sit, which question shall be decided by the vote of all those members of the superior court who are not members of the inferior court. (F. G. 239.) See Art. 113, 115, 389 (18).

[*Remark.*—This is rather strange, that the inferior court, in a complaint, is authorized to

sit as judge when it is a party. See Art. 245, 239. The vote should be taken upon each ground of complaint or appeal separately. This will avoid confusion in formulating the judgment.]

236. The decision may be (*a*) to confirm or to reverse in whole or in part the judgment of the inferior court; (*b*) or to remit the cause for the purpose of amending the record should it appear to be incorrect or defective; (*c*) or for a new trial. (F. G. 262.)

237. *On the final decision of a cause* in a higher court the judgment shall be sent down to the court in which the case originated. (F. G. 189.)

[*Remark.*—A committee should be appointed to formulate the judgment of the court.]

If an appellant is found to manifest a litigious or other unchristian spirit in the prosecution of his appeal, he shall be censured according to the degree of his offence. (F. G. 264.)

COMPLAINT.

238. The only other mode by which a judicial decision may be reversed or corrected is by complaint.

A complaint is a representation made to a superior court against an inferior court. (F. G. 267.)

But a complaint shall not suspend while pending the effect of the decision complained of. (F. G. 267.)

239. *The parties to a complaint* shall be denominated complainant and respondent, and the latter shall be the court against which the complaint is taken. (F. G. 269.)

Any member of the church submitting to its authority may complain against every species of decision, except where a party against whom a decision has been rendered takes his appeal against it. (F. G. 267.) See Art. 248.

[*Remark.*—*A number of members* may be associated together as complainants, a minority of a court, or the court itself.]

240. *Notice of complaint* shall be given in the same time and form as notice of appeal. (F. G. 268.) See Art. 243.

[*Remark.*—The same form does not mean that the word appeal is to be used, but that it is to be in writing and set forth the reasons why the superior court shall interfere. See Art. 230.]

FORM OF NOTICE OF COMPLAINT. (*Suggested.*)

Please take notice that the undersigned (here describe the person as communicants or members of the court submitting to its authority) intends to complain to the (name of court, Presbytery or Synod) against your reverend body because of the decision made by it on the —— day of ———, in the case of (here give the title of case if in a judicial case) or in the matter of (here describe the decision if in other than a judicial case). The complaint with its reasons and grounds are hereto attached.

(Signed), ——— ———,

To the (name of court). Date, ———.

FORM OF COMPLAINT. (*Suggested.*)

Synod of ——, Presbytery of ——, A., B., C., etc., complainants, against the (name of court), respondent.

To the Reverend (Presbytery of C. D.)

The undersigned complainants, being communicants, of the church of ——— or members of the (Session) and submitting to its authority, complaining against the respondents herein, allege:

1. That the said (Session of) in the proceedings of a judicial case entitled (here give the title) or in passing certain resolutions (here describe or quote them) on the ——— day of —— were guilty of great irregularities, to-wit: (here enumerate them).

2. That said (Session) acted contrary to justice and evidence in its findings of facts in the following particulars: Whereby (if in a judicial case, the accused party was unrighteously acquitted or unjustly condemned) to the injury of the party and good name of the church. (If not in judicial case. Whereby the welfare, peace and purity of the church is injured.)

3. That said (Session) erred in its interpretation of the Standards of the church in concluding or deciding that (here describe the decision), which is injurious to the welfare of the church and its peace and purity.

4. That said (Session) in deciding, etc. (here describe the action), acted unwisely and has thereby established precedent dangerous and injurious to the peace and prosperity of the church.

Wherefore the complainants pray your honored body to reverse and annul the said action complained of, and to order the respondents herein to give such relief as may seem wise and equitable.

(Signed), —— ——.

This notice and complaint should be endorsed by the Clerk or Moderator, with an acknowledgment of having been served upon the inferior court within the time prescribed by the Rules of Discipline.

241. *The Assembly refused to hear* and dismissed complaints on the following subjects, declaring that they were not constitutional grounds of complaint:

The obedience of an inferior court to the orders of its superior court constitutionally made. (1847.)

The refusal to make an *in thesi* deliverance. (1844.)

The exception that a certain matter was unwise and inexpedient, it being merely an opinion. (1864, North.)

The meeting of Session calling, without the co-operation of the pastor, a meeting of the congregation for considering the dissolution of the pastoral relation. (1868, North.)

A Moderator's ruling where no appeal was taken therefrom to the house. (1869, North.)

The refusal of a court to read the minutes of last meeting. (1873.)

The refusal to put a call in the hands of a pastor. (1875.)

242. *Complaints were entertained by the Assembly* against a Synod for dissolving a Presbytery. (1836.)

Against a Synod for refusing to divide a Presbytery. (1832.)

Against a court for refusing to investigate rumors at the request of an aggrieved party, though a matter in its discretion. (1881, N.)

243. *A complaint made by a church court* against its superior court must show on its

face that it was adopted by the court complaining, otherwise it will be dismissed. (1892, C.)

244. *Objections* taken against the action of Presbytery in dissolving the pastoral relation taken to a higher court is a complaint, not an appeal. (1889, R., citing Art. 225.)

245. *After the superior court has ascertained* that the complaint is regular (this is generally through the report of the judicial committee), it shall—

1. Read the record of the case. The court complained of is to send up its record as provided in F. G. 271. See Art. 232, 233.
2 To hear the complainant.
3. To hear the respondent, by its representative.
4. Hear the complainant in reply.
5. It shall then consider and decide the case. (F. G. 269, 235, 236.)

246. *The superior court has discretionary power* to annul any portion or the whole of the decision complained of, or to send it back to the inferior court with instructions for a new hearing. (F. G. 270.)

A case justly and rightly decided will not be reversed because of irregularities in its proceedings. (1880, North.)

247. *Restraining a minister* from the exercise of his office without the forms of process is not irregular where he is deemed mentally unsound and irresponsible for his words and conduct.

248. *There are three differences* between appeals and complaints:

1. *The parties.*—In an appeal the parties are the "original parties," the Presbyterian Church represented by a prosecutor and the accused. In a complaint the parties are different—a complainant, one who was not on judicial trial, and the other party is the court complained of—a complaint arising from a judicial case incidentally affects the original parties.

2. *Decisions.*—Appeals are limited to judicial cases. Complaints are not limited at all; "every species" of decision may be subject of complaint.

3. *Effects.*—Appeal, while pending, arrests sentence. Complaints, while pending, does not suspend the effect of the decision complained of. (See Art. 230.)

REVIEW AND CONTROL.

249. *Every decision* which is made by any church court, except the highest, is subject to the review of its superior court, and may be brought before it by general review and control, reference, appeal or complaint. (F. G. 238.)

The word "reference," as used above, is inaccurate, and is intended for memorial or petition. (See Art. 214 and Art. 255–257.)

250. *It is the duty of every court* above a church Session, at least once a year, to review the records of the proceedings of the courts next below. And if any lower court shall omit to send up its records for this purpose, the

higher court may issue an order to produce them, either immediately or at a particular time, as circumstances may require. (F. G. 240.)

A printed copy uncertified to by Stated Clerk will not be received for review. (1891.)

251. *In reviewing the records* of an inferior court it is proper to examine:

1. Whether the proceedings have been constitutional and regular.

2. Whether they have been wise, equitable and for the edification of the church.

3. Whether they have been correctly recorded.

4. Whether the lawful injunction of the superior courts have been obeyed. (F. G. 241.)

252. *In most cases* the superior court may be considered as fulfilling its duty by simply recording on its own minutes the approval, the correction of proceedings or the censure which it may think proper to pass on the records under review, and also by making an entry of the same in the book reviewed.

But should any irregular proceedings be found, such as demands the interference of the superior court, the inferior court may be required to review and correct them. (F. G. 242, but see Art. 259.)

253. *A lower court has no right* to disapprove of the records of a superior court. (1861–'62, R.)

254. *Where a superior court excepted* to the records of its inferior court disapproving of such superior court's records, and the lower

court justifies and repeats its disapproval, notwithstanding, it was censured. (1866, North, Synod of Missouri.)

255. *Courts may sometimes entirely neglect* to perform their duty, by which neglect heretical opinions or corrupt practices may be allowed to gain ground; or offenders of a very gross character may be suffered to escape; or some circumstances in their proceedings of very great irregularity may not be distinctly recorded by them; in any of which cases their records will by no means exhibit to the superior court a full view of their proceedings.

If, therefore, the next superior court be well advised that any such neglect or irregularity has occurred on the part of the inferior court, it is incumbent on it to take cognizance of the same, and to examine, deliberate and judge in the whole matter as completely as if it had been recorded, and thus brought up by a review of the records. (F. G. 244.)

256. *When any court* having appellate jurisdiction shall be advised, either by the records of the court next below or by memorial, either with or without protest, or by any other satisfactory method, of any important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings of such court, the first step shall be to cite the court alleged to have offended, to appear by representative or in writing, at a special time and place, and to show what it has done or failed to do in the case in question. (F. G. 245. See Art. 258.)

257. *The court thus issuing the citation* may reverse or redress the proceedings of the court below in other than judicial cases, or it may censure delinquent court, or it may remit the whole matter to the delinquent court with an injunction to take it up and dispose of it in a constitutional manner, or it may stay all further proceedings in the case, as the circumstances may require. (F. G. 245.)

258. *In process against an inferior court* the trial shall be conducted according to the rules provided for process against individuals, so far as they may be applicable. (F. G. 246.)

As to who may vote in these proceedings, see Art. 235.

259. *In cases of process,* however, no judgment of an inferior court shall be reversed, unless it be regularly brought up by appeal or complaint. (F. G. 243.)

COMMISSIONS.

260. Commissions differ from ordinary committees in this, that while the committee is appointed to simply examine, consider, and report, the commission is authorized to deliberate upon and conclude the business submitted to it, subject, however, to the review of the court appointing it. To this end full records of its proceedings shall be submitted to the court appointing it, which, if approved, may be entered on the minutes of the court appointing it. (F. G. 92.)

261. What may be done by commission:

a. The taking of testimony in judicial cases. See Art. 104–'5.

b. The installation of ministers.

c. The ordination of ministers. See Art. 319.

d. The visitations of portions of the church affected with disorder. See Art. 364.

e. The organization of new churches. See Art. 366. (F. G. 93.)

f. The General Assembly shall have power to commit the various interests pertaining to the general work of evangelization to one or more commissions. (F. G. 93.)

g. The trials of appeals by Synod and General Assembly.

262. The Synod and General Assembly may, with the consent of the parties, commit any case of trial coming before them on appeal to the judgment of a commission composed of others than the members of the court from which the appeal comes up.

The commission of the Synod shall consist of not less than fifteen, of whom seven shall be ruling elders. The commission of the Assembly of not less than twenty-seven, of whom thirteen shall be ruling elders. In each case two-thirds of the commission shall be a quorum to attend to business. (F. G. 94.)

The commission shall try the cause in the manner prescribed by the rules of discipline, and in rendering judgment, shall make a full statement of the case, which shall be submitted

to the court for its action as its judgment in the case. (F. G. 94.)

263. *None but those appointed* have a right to a seat in the commission. (1882.)

264. *A Presbyterial commission,* neither a quorum thereof, ought ever to consist of less than two ministers and one ruling elder, yet if the Presbytery deem it inexpedient to have so many act in a commission, it is not to be regarded as an irregularity. (1883.)

PART II.

OF THE SUPERIOR COURTS.

(See also Appeals, Complaints, Review and Control, References, Memorial, Records.)

OF THE SUPERIOR COURTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRESBYTERY.

265. *The scriptural form* of church government is that of Presbytery, and is comprehended under these five heads of doctrine, viz.: 1. Of the church; 2. Of its members; 3. Of its officers; 4. Of its courts; 5. Of its orders. (F. G. 17.)

This scriptural doctrine of Presbytery is necessary to the perfection of the order of the visible church, but is not essential to its existence. (F. G. 7.)

[*Remark.*—Here the liberality of the Presbyterian Church is apparent. Other denominations are distinctly recognized as being churches of Christ, and all evangelical bodies are recognized as churches. While there are other denominations who recognize others as churches in practice, as, for instance, the Methodist, yet they make no doctrinal recognition in the articles of doctrine or the organic law of the church. The Presbyterians stand alone in making such recognition in the organic law of the church. The fundamental principle of the

Romish Church is that there is but one visible church—the Roman Catholic. The fundamental principle of the Episcopal is that there is but one church—that which is subject to the Bishop in apostolic succession (High Church); and the Baptists, no church without immersion. In contra-distinction from these, who make a form the essential condition of a church, the Presbyterians distinctly recognize other organized bodies of believers as churches.]

266. *The Presbytery consists* of all the ministers and one ruling elder from each church within a certain district. (F. G. 72.)

The Assembly has no power to erect a Presbytery. (1876.) This power belongs to the Synod.

The bounds of a Presbytery are fixed by the Synod. See Art. 380.

Except in very extraordinary cases, Presbyteries should be organized with geographical bounds. (1834.)

A departure from this rule was permitted in regard to missionaries laboring among the Indians. (1826.)

The members are all the ministers residing in the bounds, unless satisfactory reasons be given to both the courts, the court where his name is enrolled, and the one in whose bounds he resides. See Art. 165, 307.

It is not required that a minister be a member of the Presbytery in which he resides, irrespective of the work in which he may be engaged. (1889—1893.) Ministers without charges are included. (1816.)

A minister with credentials may be denied membership (R. 1891), and where he is thus rejected, he is in such case still a member of the Presbytery dismissing him. (1894.)

The reason of such rejection should be reported to the court granting the credentials by the Presbytery which refused to receive him. (1834.) See Art. 297–300.

Negro ministers and churches under the care of Synod are to be organized by the Synod into separate Presbyteries as speedily as it can be done consistently with a wise regard to their stability and growth, and these Presbyteries are to be formed by the General Assembly, as soon as the way is clear, into an independent Synod. (1883.)

[*Remark.*—There is no doubt that this policy of a separation of the colored people into distinct Synods is utterly unconstitutional, for the constitution declares "that the Presbytery consists of all the ministers and one ruling elder from each church within a certain district." A Presbyterian Church regularly organized by order of Presbytery, although composed of colored people, is a part of that Presbytery, and it cannot be set off constitutionally into another Presbytery embracing the territory already occupied by an existing Presbytery. (A Presbytery within a Presbytery.) And if the matter ever comes up by complaint, or appeal, the Assembly itself will have to declare, if consistent, that it is unconstitutional.

[This has already been exemplified in a case

of Rev. Sam. Park, although he was ordained and given a seat in the Presbytery with the express condition that he should not vote, yet, afterward, on the denial of his vote, the matter came before the Assembly by complaint, and the Assembly decided that he could not be deprived of his vote, and that, although the Presbytery in refusing to give him the right of voting were carrying out the policy directed previously by the Assembly.

[The colored churches or ministers may go into the civil court and enforce their rights as set forth in the constitution and the decisions of the General Assembly, for the Assembly's decisions may be enforced by civil law, the policy of which is not to interfere with, but to enforce church authority.

[The fact that these colored churches were organized conditionally will not alter the matter, for the constitution is supreme, and unconstitutional conditions must be ignored even by the church itself. Once in, he has the right to all the constitutional rights and privileges. In 1873 the Northern Assembly held that it was unconstitutional to organize a Presbytery within the geographical limits of an existing Presbytery, that the Presbytery consists of the representatives of each church within a certain district, without regard to race or color. It seems that it would be well, then, to make some change in the constitution on this point at once, defining a Presbytery in regard to its constituency.]

It was alleged in a protest against the dissolution of the Third Presbytery of Philadelphia that it had been the custom for a long time to dismiss ministers to a different Presbytery than that in which they resided whenever there were such personal animosities as rendered their meeting in the same body unpleasant. (1835)

This seems to be the custom with the Session in regard to private members of the church.

267. *Corresponding Members.* — Ministers in good standing in other Presbyteries or in any ecclesiastical body with which this church has established correspondence, being present at any meeting of the Presbytery, may be invited to sit and deliberate as corresponding members. (F. G. 80.)

Such members cannot vote. (1830.)

The correspondence is only such as has been established by the General Assembly. (1892.)

268. Correspondence has been established with:

The United Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

The Free Church of Scotland.

The Reformed Episcopal Church in the United States.

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

The Reformed Presbyterian Church.

The General Synod of the Reformed Church in America.

The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. (1883.)

269. *Visiting Brethren.*—Ministers in good standing in other evangelical churches may be invited, when present, to sit as visiting brethren. (F. G. 80.)

It is proper in these cases of corresponding and visiting brethren for the Moderator to introduce them to the Presbytery and to give them the right hand of fellowship. (F. G. 80.)

270. *Every ruling elder not known* to Presbytery shall produce a certificate of his regular appointment from the Session of the church which he represents. (F. G. 73.)

271. *Any three ministers* belonging to the Presbytery, together with at least one ruling elder, being met at the time and place appointed, shall be a quorum competent to proceed to business. (F. G. 74.)

272. *Less than a quorum* can do no valid act, but if they do so, it may become valid by a quorum subsequently adopting it. (1860.)

In default of a quorum, any two members met at the time and place appointed may adjourn from time to time, that an opportunity may be given for a quorum to assemble. (Par. Rules.)

See Moderator.

273. *Every meeting* of the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly shall be opened and closed with prayer, and in closing the final meeting a psalm or hymn may be sung and the benediction pronounced. (F. G. 57.)

274. The Presbytery shall meet at least twice a year on its own adjournment. (F. G. 79.)

Beyond its bounds.—It may meet. (1848, 1891.)

275. *Adjourned meetings* are continuations of a meeting. Members of the original meeting are the proper members of an adjourned meeting, but the Sessions may appoint a different member to an adjourned meeting; yet, if a principal sat in the original meeting, it is not permissible for his alternate to sit in the adjourned meeting. (1827.)

[*Remark.*—But this is very generally obviated by Presbyteries' standing rules allowing the alternate to sit.]

276. *Call Meetings.*—When any emergency requires a meeting sooner than the time to which it stands adjourned, the Moderator, or, in case of his absence, death or disability to act, the clerk shall, with the concurrence or at the request of two ministers and two ruling elders of different churches, call a special meeting.

For this purpose he shall give notice, specifying the particular business of the intended meeting to every minister belonging to the Presbytery, and to the Session of every vacant church, in due time, previous to the meeting, which shall not be less than ten days. And nothing shall be transacted at such special meeting besides the particular business for

which the court has been thus convened. (F. G. 79.)

When Synod orders Presbytery to meet, the meeting is of the nature of a call-meeting, and the rules regulating call-meetings ought to apply, except where Synod orders the meeting to be held during its own session on business connected therewith. (1848, 1867, 1869, 1870, 1886.)

The elders who sat in the last stated meeting are the proper members of the call-meeting. (1893.)

[*Remark.*—This does not prevent the Session from appointing some other elder to sit therein. This is fairly implied when the notice is given to Sessions instead of to the last sitting Presbytery. It is fairly implied when Session appoints representative to Synod knowing that Presbytery is to meet then.]

277. THE PRESBYTERY HAS POWER TO ISSUE APPEALS, COMPLAINTS AND REFERENCES BROUGHT BEFORE IT IN AN ORDERLY MANNER. (F. G. 77.)

[*Remark.*—The manner in which these are to be brought before the Presbytery and issued is prescribed by the constitution of the church.]

See appeals, complaints and references.

278. HAS POWER TO ASSUME ORIGINAL JURISDICTION IN CASES WHERE SESSION IS UNABLE TO EXERCISE ITS AUTHORITY. (F. G. 77.) Art. 64.

279. HAS POWER TO LICENSE CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY. See Art. 283.

No one is a candidate until he has been received as such by the Presbytery to which he naturally belongs (Art. 283), after a careful examination of his motives and qualifications for the work. (1857.)

280. *Candidates applying* to the Presbytery to be licensed to preach the gospel shall produce satisfactory testimonials of their good moral character, and of their being communicating members of the church in regular standing. And the Presbytery shall examine them respecting their experimental acquaintance with religion, and the motives which influence them to desire the sacred office. This examination shall be close and particular, and shall ordinarily be conducted in the presence of the Presbytery only. It is recommended that the candidate be also required to produce a diploma of bachelor or master of arts from some college or university, or, at least, authentic testimonials of his having gone through a regular course of learning. (F. G. 131.)

He should, in making application, produce a certificate from his church Session testifying to his physical, mental and spiritual qualifications for the work. (1880.)

281. *They should report* to each meeting of Presbytery. (Presbyterial Rules.)

282. *A candidate is responsible* to his Presbytery for his diligence and ability as a

candidate, but to the Session for moral conduct. (Art. 295.)

Presbytery may control him as to what school he shall attend, but this must be exercised with prudence. (1893.)

No aid shall be given those studying beyond the bounds of the Assembly. (1893.)

Candidates applying for aid must report at the time all other aid promised or received. (1894.)

May preach (labor) in churches, he being put under the care of the Home Mission Committee or neighboring minister. (1893.)

283. *The Presbytery shall license probationers* to preach the gospel in order that, after sufficiently trying their gifts and receiving from the church a good report, they may in due time ordain them to the sacred office. (F. G. 129.)

The trials of a candidate for licensure shall ordinarily be had by the Presbytery having jurisdiction of the church of which he is a member; but should any one find it more convenient to put himelf under the care of a Presbytery at a distance from that to which he most naturally belongs, he may be received by the said Presbytery on his producing testimonials either from the Presbytery within the bounds of which he has usually resided, or from any two ministers of that Presbytery in good standing, of his exemplary piety and other requisite qualifications. (F. G. 130.) See Art. 289, 279.

284. *The Presbytery shall try* each candidate as to his knowledge of the Latin language and the original languages of the Holy Scriptures. It shall also examine him on mental philosophy, logic and rhetoric, on ethics, on the natural and exact sciences, on theology (natural and revealed), and on ecclesiastical history, the sacraments, and church government.

Moreover, the Presbytery shall require of him:

1. A discussion in Latin of a thesis on some common head in divinity.

2. An exegesis or critical exercise, in which the candidate shall give a specimen of his taste and judgment in sacred criticism, presenting an explication of the original text, stating its connection, illustrating its force and beauties, removing its difficulties, and solving any important questions which it may present.

3. A lecture or exposition of several verses of Scripture.

4. A sermon. (F. G. 132.)

These and other similar exercises, at the discretion of the Presbytery, shall be exhibited until it shall have obtained satisfaction as to the candidate's piety, learning and aptness to teach in the church. (F. G. 133.)

285. *No candidate, except* in extraordinary cases, shall be licensed unless he shall have completed the usual course of academical studies, and shall also have studied divinity at least two years under some approved teacher of theology; and whenever any Presbytery shall

see reason to depart from this rule, it shall always make a record of the fact upon its minutes, with the reasons therefor. (F. G. 134.)

286. *If the Presbytery* be satisfied with his trials, it shall then proceed to license him in the following manner: The Moderator shall propose to him the following questions, viz:

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of this church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?

3. Do you promise to study the peace, unity and purity of the church?

4. Do you promise to submit yourself, in the Lord, to the government of this Presbytery, or any other into the bounds of which you may be called? (F. G. 135.)

287. *The candidate* having answered these questions in the affirmative, and the Moderator having offered up a prayer suitable to the occasion, he shall address the candidate to the following purpose: In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by that authority which he has given to the church for its edification, we do license you to preach the gospel as a probationer for the holy ministry, wherever God in his providence may call you; and for this purpose may the blessing of God rest upon you and the Spirit of Christ fill your heart. Amen.

288. *And record shall* be made of the license in the following or like form, viz.:

"At ——, the —— day of ——, the Presbytery of —— having received testimonials in favor of ——, of his having gone through a regular course of literature, of his good moral character, and of his being in the communion of the church, proceeded to take the usual parts of trial for his licensure; and he having given satisfaction as to his accomplishments in literature, as to his experimental acquaintance with religion and as to his proficiency in divinity and other studies, the Presbytery did, and hereby does, express its approbation of all these parts of trial; and he having adopted the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this church, and satisfactorily answered the questions appointed to be put to candidates to be licensed, the Presbytery did, and hereby does, license him, the said ——, to preach the gospel of Christ, as a probationer for the holy ministry, within the bounds of this Presbytery, or wherever else he shall be orderly called." (F. G. 136.)

289. *When any candidate* for licensure shall have occasion, while his trials are going on, to remove from the bounds of his own Presbytery into those of another, it shall be considered regular for the latter Presbytery, on his producing proper testimonials from the former, to take up his trials at the point at which they were left, and conduct them to a conclusion in the same manner as if they had been

commenced by itself. (F. G. 137.) See Art. 283.

290. *In like manner*, when any probationer, after licensure, shall by the permission of his Presbytery remove beyond its limits, an extract of the record of his licensure and a Presbyterial recommendation, signed by the Clerk, shall be his testimonials to the Presbytery under whose care he shall come. (F. G. 138.)

291. *Presbyteries should* require probationers to devote themselves diligently to the trials of their gifts. (F. G. 139.) Enforced, see 293.

292. *Women* cannot be licensed to preach. (1832, 1880.)

The Scriptures exclude them from this office and from public prayer and exhortation, but they may hold religious meetings among themselves for conversation, prayer, and missionary work. (1891.)

293. *When a probationer* shall have been preaching for a considerable time, and his services do not appear to be edifying to the church, the Presbytery may, if it thinks proper. recall his license; and it shall be its duty to do so whenever the probationer shall, without necessity, devote himself to such pursuits as interfere with a full trial of his gifts, according to his license. (F. G. 140)

The revoking of a license is discretionary with the Presbytery. Complaint case. (1870.)

294. *Preaching without* license is irregular, and a person may be censured for so doing. (1710, 1821.)

295. *A licentiate is* one of the laity, and subject to the jurisdiction of the Session of the church of which he is a member. (1829.)

[*Remark.*—This appears as rather inconsistent with Art 290, but compare Art. 58.]

They may solemnize marriages where the civil law expressly authorizes it. (1844.) Cannot be Moderator. (1829.)

296. *Unlicensed preaching.* The Southern Assembly declares that it is the plain teaching of our standard that the word of God is to be preached only by such men as are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to that office. (L. Cat., Q. 158.)

Indeed, the whole doctrine of our church, as to the ministry, and the regulations under which men are inducted into it, show that, in addition to the call of God, the authority of the church is necessary to call and appoint them to this work, whether as pastors or evangelists, and no amount of apparent or even real good which may be connected with the labors of unauthorized preachers or evangelists can justify us in dishonoring the ordinance of Christ, and by this means undermining his church.

The Assembly protests and earnestly urges all our ministers and people to avoid encouraging the same, whether by active co-operation or otherwise. (1878.)

297. PRESBYTERY HAS POWER TO RECEIVE MINISTERS.

(*a*), If from a foreign country, the same rules as to receiving them from other churches, and other cautions as seem fit, etc., but see A. Digest.

(*b*), If from another Presbytery or denomination.

Ministers seeking admission to a Presbytery shall be examined on experimental religion, and also touching their views in theology and church government. If applicants come from other denominations, the Presbytery shall also require them to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination. (F. G. 75.) See Art. 327, 309.

298. *The Presbytery shall* cause to be transscribed, in some convenient part of the book of records, the obligations required of ministers at their ordination, which shall be subscribed by all admitted to membership, in the following form, viz.: "I, A. B., do *ex animo* receive and subscribe the above obligation as a just and true exhibition of my faith and principles, and do resolve and promise to exercise my ministry in conformity thereunto." (F. G. 76.)

299. *Each Presbytery is the judge* of the qualifications of its members.

An applicant bearing a letter of dismissal to a Presbytery, from a sister Presbytery, should ordinarily be received, but the receiving Presbytery has the right to reject him. Its reasons

for doing so should be set forth and are subject to review of the higher court. It is the right also of the Presbytery to judge of the expediency of receiving those whose letters may be regular and good, but it should not refuse without sufficient reasons. The applicant has the right to appeal, but in ordinary cases he should be received, and Presbytery should put him on trial (1801, 1825), but in 1834 Assembly decided that ministers dismissed in good standing should be received on credit of their constitutional testimonies, unless they have, subsequent to their dismission, forfeited their good standing.

If an applicant with regular letter is rejected, paragraph 277 does not forbid his being received back into the dismissing Presbytery. (1894.) See Art. 173, 266.

300. *After an applicant* has been admitted it cannot be reconsidered. His membership can be severed only by actual process. (1816.)

From extinct Presbytery a member can be received upon a letter granted prior to its extinction, and, if charged with an offence since dismissal, his trial may be referred to the Synod, or proceeded with by receiving Presbytery. (1825.)

301. PRESBYTERY HAS POWER TO DISMISS MINISTERS. (F. G. 77.)

When a Presbytery shall dismiss a minister or probationer or candidate, the name of the Presbytery to which he is dismissed shall be

given in the certificate, and he shall remain under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery dismissing him until received by the other. (F. G. 280.)

302. *This certificate* certifies the standing to its date, and is good for one year only. (See Art. 163.)

303. *Neglect to apply* in twelve months for a letter. (See Art. 166.)

304. *Dismissal by a committee* cannot be. (1830, O. S. 1865.)

305. *Must be dismissed* as in good standing, otherwise must be dealt with as an offender. (North, 1875.)

306. *Dismissal may be* to other denominations which are in correspondence with the Assembly; in such cases it is proper to give only a certificate of character and standing, and in this there is no intention to reflect upon the minister or the body to which he goes. (1876.)

307. *When a Synod* transfers a part of the territory of one Presbytery to another, it has the effect of transferring the ministers thereof without their being formally dismissed or examined and received by said Presbytery. (1894.)

308. PRESBYTERY HAS POWER TO ORDAIN, INSTALL AND REMOVE MINISTERS and to establish the pastoral relation and to dissolve it at the request of one or both of the parties, or where the interests of religion imperatively demand it. (F. G. 77, 244.)

309. *On the election* of a pastor (see Art. 21–28), if it appear that a large minority of the voters are averse to the candidate, who has a majority of votes, and cannot be induced to concur in the call, the Moderator shall endeavor to dissuade the majority from prosecuting it further; but if the electors be nearly or quite unanimous, or if the majority shall insist upon their right to call a pastor, the Moderator shall, in that case, proceed to draw a call in due form and to have it subscribed by them, certifying at the same time, in writing, the number and circumstances of those who do not concur in the call, all of which proceedings shall be laid before the Presbytery, together with the call. (F. G. 106.)

310. *The call* shall be in the following or like form, viz.:

"The church of ———, being on sufficient grounds well satisfied of the ministerial qualifications of you, ———, and having good hopes from our past experience (or knowledge) of your labors, that your ministrations in the gospel will be profitable to our spiritual interests, do earnestly call you to undertake the pastoral office in said congregation, promising you in the discharge of your duty all proper support, encouragement and obedience in the Lord. And that you may be free from worldly cares and avocations, we hereby promise and oblige ourselves to pay you the sum of ——— in regular monthly (or quarterly or half-yearly

or yearly) payments, during the time of your being and continuing the regular pastor of this church.

"In testimony whereof we have respectively subscribed our names, this —— day of ——, A. D. ——.

"Attested by ——, Moderator of the meeting." (F. G. 107.)

Assembly declined to take steps toward changing this form, limiting it for five years. (1889.)

But if any church shall choose to subscribe its call by the ruling elders and deacons, or by a committee, it shall be at liberty to do so. But it shall, in such case, be fully certified to the Presbytery by the minister or other person who presided that the persons signing here have been appointed for that purpose by a public vote of the church, and that the call has been in all other respects prepared as above directed. (F. G. 108.)

311. *One or more commissioners* shall be appointed to present and prosecute the call before the Presbytery. (F. G. 109.)

If the call be to a minister or probationer of another Presbytery, the commissioners appointed to prosecute the call shall produce an attested certificate from their own Presbytery that it has been laid before that body and found in order, and that permission has been granted them to prosecute it before the Presbytery to which he belongs. (F. G. 110.)

312. *No minister or probationer* shall receive a call from a church but by the permission of his Presbytery. When a call has been presented to the Presbytery, if found in order, and the Presbytery deem it for the good of the church, they shall place it in the hands of the person to whom it is addressed. (F. G. 116.)

[*Remark.*—The reasons for this rule may be summed up as follows: There are instances where, as shown by experience, the minister or probationer may be not such a character as supposed by the congregation; may have proved himself to be fickle, indiscreet, etc., or he may be laboring under a bad reputation; and of such matters the congregation, he being ordinarily a stranger to them, may know nothing, whereas the members of Presbytery may know, and are generally in a better position to know, the history of the individual, his failures, successes and general disposition. 2. The Presbytery is in a better position of judging of the mental abilities, knowledge, etc. 3. That pastor or minister called to the charge of a church is thereby introduced into a close relation—as a member of Presbytery, the peace and good name of this body are to be preserved. 4. The terms of the call are under the supervision of Presbytery, to prevent either the congregation or the minister from making merchandise of the gospel—a check to covetousness. That the church, on one hand, should have as full pastoral care as is necessary and as it is able to pay for, and, on the other hand, that

the diligence and comfort of the minister be secured.

[Presbyteries have declined to place calls in the hands of ministers and probationers on the ground that the salary was inadequate; or on the ground that the church was in arrears to its former pastor; on the ground that the church had agreed with another church served in conjunction with it not to call a minister except by and with the consent or concurrence of such church; on the ground that the general good of religion would not be promoted thereby; either from the circumstances existing in the congregation and community of the church calling the minister, or in that of his existing pastorate. (See Hodge's History, 250–265.)]

313. *When a call* for the pastoral services of a probationer has been accepted by him, the Presbytery shall take immediate steps for his ordination. (F G. 117.)

314. *A congregation* desiring to call a pastor from his charge, shall, by its commissioners, represent to the Presbytery the ground on which it pleads his removal. The Presbytery, having heard all the parties, may, upon viewing the whole case, either recommend them to desist from prosecuting the call, or may order it to be delivered to the minister to whom it is addressed, with or without advice, or may decline to place the call in his hands, as it shall appear most for the peace and edification of the church at large; or it may refer the whole mat-

ter to the Synod for advice and direction; and no pastor shall be translated without his own consent. If the parties are not ready to have the matter issued at the meeting then in progress, a written citation shall be given the minister and his church to appear before the Presbytery at its next meeting, which citation shall be read from the pulpit on the Sabbath after the sermon, at least two Sabbaths before the intended meeting. (F. G. 126.)

This means if they are not present, and agreeing to have the matter issued, it is necessary to cite, etc. (1895.)

314. *If the congregation*, or other field of labor to which a minister or probationer is called, be under the jurisdiction of a different Presbytery, on his acceptance of a call he shall be furnished with proper testimonials, and required to repair immediately to that Presbytery, in order that he may be regularly inducted into his office, according to preceding directions. (F. G. 127.)

[*Remark.*—The terms of a call can be subsequently changed only by consent of Presbytery.]

315. *When any minister* shall tender the resignation of his pastoral charge to his Presbytery, the Presbytery shall cite the church as in preceding directions, to appear by its commission at the next meeting, to show cause, if any it has, why the Presbytery should not accept the resignation. If the church fail to ap-

pear, or if its reasons for retaining its pastor be deemed insufficient, his resignation shall be accepted and the pastoral relation dissolved.

If any church desires to be relieved of its pastor, a similar process shall be observed.

But whether the minister or the church initiate proceedings for a dissolution of the relations, there shall always be a meeting of the church called and conducted in precisely the same manner as when the call of a pastor is to be made out. (F. G. 128.)

[*Remark.*—Articles 314 and 315 are somewhat confusing. Article 314 contemplates the dissolution of the pastoral relation on the ground that the pastor would be more useful in another field of labor to which he is called, and the pastor is considered as passive and acquiescent, and those calling him take the initiative. It would be well if this provision were carried out, as it would prevent that unpleasantness which frequently arises when a pastor takes the initiative, and shows a preference for another flock. Article 315 contemplates the dissolving of the pastoral relation on other ground than the pastor's call to another field, and in the absence of such call. Practically Art. 314 has become a dead letter, Art. 315 being used instead thereof.]

316. *Upon those whom God calls* to bear office in his church he bestows suitable gifts for the discharge of their various duties. Wherefore, every candidate for office is to be approved by the court by which he is ordained.

And it is indispensable that, besides possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, natural and acquired, every one admitted to an office should be sound in faith, and that his life and coversation be according to godliness. (F. G. 98.) See Art. 20, 26 and 27.

Ordination is the authoritative admission of one duly called to an office in the church of God, accompanied with prayer and the imposition of hands, to which it is proper to add the giving of the right hand of fellowship. (F. G. 100.)

Those who have been lawfully called are to be inducted into their offices by the ordination of a court. (F. G. 99.) See Art. 20.

The ordination is ordinarily by a court. (F. G. 6.)

317. *Trials for ordination*, especially in a different Presbytery from that in which the candidate was licensed, shall consist of a careful examination as to his acquaintance with experimental religion; as to his knowledge of philosophy, theology, ecclesiastical history, the Greek and Hebrew languages, and such other branches of learning as to the Presbytery shall appear requisite, and as to his knowledge of the doctrine of the sacraments and the principles and rules of government and discipline of the church. He shall further be required to preach a sermon before the Presbytery. The Presbytery being fully satisfied of his qualifications for the sacred office, shall appoint a day for his ordination, which ought, if practi-

cable, to be in that church of which he is to be the pastor. (F. G. 118.)

No one should be ordained to the work of the gospel ministry until he has given evidence of his ability to edify the church. (F. G. 139.)

License must precede ordination. (1889.)

318. *Must be* ordained by a court. See Art. 20, 316.

319. The commission for the ordination of a minister shall always consist of a quorum of the court, but the Presbytery itself shall conduct the previous examinations. (F. G. 93.)

Ordination of a missionary in the foreign field may be performed by authority of the Presbytery, after complying by correspondence as nearly as practicable with F. G. 118, Art. 317. The ordained missionaries (ministers and ruling elders) in the same field may be authorized by Presbytery to form themselves into a commission for this purpose, and the ordination to be reported to the home Presbytery, and his name shall be entered on the roll, and, when this has been done, the commission is dissolved. (1893.)

Must be to a definite work.

320. *As every ecclesiastical office*, according to the Scriptures, is a special charge, no man shall be ordained unless it be to the performance of a definite work. (F. G. 101.)

321. *The work must be* that of a pastor or evangelist; cannot be to the work of a professor teaching in college. (1893.)

322. *No Presbytery shall ordain* any probationer to the office of the gospel ministry with reference to his laboring within the bounds of another Presbytery, but shall furnish him with the necessary testimonials, and require him to repair to the Presbytery within whose bounds he expects to labor, that he may submit himself to its authority, according to the constitution of the church. (F. G. 124.)

323. *It ought* to be, if practicable, in the church of which he is to be the pastor. (F. G. 118.)

324. *Forms and customs* at installation and ordination:

The day appointed for the ordination having come, and the Presbytery being convened, a member of the Presbytery, previously appointed to that duty, shall preach a sermon adapted to the occasion. The same, or another member appointed to preside, shall afterwards briefly recite from the pulpit the proceedings of the Presbytery preparatory to the ordination; he shall point out the nature and importance of the ordinance, and endeavor to impress the audience with a proper sense of the solemnity of the transaction.

Then, addressing himself to the candidate, he shall propose to him the following questions, viz.:

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God; the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?

3. Do you approve of the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States?

4. Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?

5. Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to seek the office of the holy ministry from love to God and a sincere desire to promote his glory in the gospel of his Son?

6. Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the gospel and the purity and peace of the church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?

7. Do you engage to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all your duties as a Christian and a minister of the gospel, whether personal or relative, private or public, and to endeavor, by the grace of God, to adorn the profession of the gospel in your conversation, and to walk with exemplary piety before the flock of which God shall make you overseer?

8. Are you now willing to take the charge of this church agreeably to your declaration at accepting their call? And do you, relying upon God for strength, promise to discharge to it the duties of a pastor? (F. G. 117.)

In the installation of an ordained minister, the following questions are to be substituted for

those addressed to a candidate for ordination, viz.:

1. Are you willing to take charge of this congregation as their pastor, agreeably to your declaration at accepting its call?

2. Do you conscientiously believe and declare, as far as you know your own heart, that, in taking upon you this charge you are influenced by a sincere desire to promote the glory of God, and the good of the church?

3. Do you solemnly promise that, by the assistance of the grace of God, you will endeavor faithfully to dicharge all the duties of a pastor to this congregation, and will be careful to maintain a deportment in all respects becoming a minister of the gospel of Christ, agreeably to your ordination engagement? (F. G. 125, Art. 244.)

324. *In the ordination of probationers* as evangelists, the eighth of the preceding questions shall be omitted, and the following substituted, to-wit, viz.:

Do you now undertake the work of an evangelist, and do you promise, in reliance on God for strength, to be faithful in the discharge of all the duties incumbent on you as a minister of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ? (F. G. 123.)

The candidate, having answered these questions in the affirmative, the presiding minister shall propose to the church the following questions:

1. Do you, the people of this congregation, continue to profess your readiness to receive

———, whom you have called to be your pastor?

2. Do you promise to receive the word of truth from his mouth with meekness and love, and to submit to him in the due exercise of discipline?

3. Do you promise to encourage him in his labors, and to assist his endeavors for your instruction and spiritual edification?

4. And do you engage to continue to him, while he is your pastor, that competent worldly maintenance which you have promised, and to furnish him with whatever you may see needful for the honor of religion and for his comfort among you? (F. G. 120.)

The people having answered these questions in the affirmative by holding up their right hands,

325. *The candidate shall kneel* and the presiding minister shall, with prayer and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, according to the apostolic example, solemnly set apart him to the holy office of the gospel ministry.

Prayer being ended, he shall rise from his knees, and the minister who presides shall first, and afterwards all the members of the Presbytery in their order, take him by the right hand, saying in words to this effect:

"We give you the right hand of fellowship to take part in this ministry with us."

The Moderator shall then say:

"I now pronounce and declare that A. B. has been regularly elected, ordained and installed

pastor of this congregation agreeably to the word of God, and according to the constitution of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, and as such he is entitled to all support, encouragement, honor and obedience in the Lord. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

After which the minister presiding, or some other appointed for the purpose, shall give a solemn charge to the pastor and to the congregation to persevere in the discharge of their reciprocal duties, and then by prayer recommend them both to the grace of God and his holy keeping, and, after singing a psalm or hymn, shall dismiss the congregation with the usual blessing, and Presbytery shall duly record the transaction. (F. G. 121.)

Ruling elders should not give either charge. (1894.)

After the installation the heads of families of the congregation then present, or at least the ruling elders and deacons, should come forward to their pastor and give him their right hand in token of cordial reception and affectionate regard. (F. G. 122.)

326. *Ordination procured by forgery* or unwarrantable means is valid (1843), but Presbytery should immediately proceed to depose. (1843.) Roman Catholic ordination is invalid (North, 1871), also Unitarian (1814), and Campbellites. (1864, North.) By other Protestant Evangelical churches it is valid. (1821.) See Art. 5 to 8.

327. *Ministers from other denominations* are to be received who adopt our standards, but are to be required to continue their studies until qualified in learning according to the requirements of our standards. (1821, 1852.) But see Art. 297 and 298.

328. *Presbytery to require ministers* to devote themselves diligently to their calling and to censure the delinquent. See Art. 314 and 329.

329. *Presbytery is to judge* ministers. (F. G. 77.)

(*a*), By special proceedings. See Art. 340.

(*b*), By usual forms of process. (—— 330–338, 59–150.)

Process against a minister shall be entered before the Presbytery of which he is a member. (F. G. 196.) See Art. 85.

Original jurisdiction in relation to ministers of the gospel pertains exclusively to the Presbytery, and in relation to other church members to the Session, unless the Session shall be unable to try the person or persons accused, in which case the Presbytery shall have the right of jurisdiction. (F. G. 161.)

Where a Board of A. B. C. F. M. dismissed from its service for immorality a Presbyterian minister in the foreign field, it was held that this did not affect his standing as a member of Presbytery—that Presbytery must deal with him according to the usual forms of process and the difficulty of distance, etc., should not deter it therefrom. (1856, N. S.)

In all questions concerning the character of ministers, the Board of Home Missions in case of difference between itself and Presbytery must abide by the decision of the Presbytery. (North, 1883.)

PRELIMINARIES TO ENTERING PROCESS.

330. *As no minister* ought on account of his office to be screened in his sin, or slightly censured, so scandalous charges ought not to be received against him on slight grounds. (F. G. 197.)

331. *If any one know* a minister to be guilty of a private offence he should warn him in private. But if the offence be persisted in, or become public, he should bring the case to the attention of some other minister of the Presbytery for his advice. (F. G. 198.)

332. *Heresy and schism* may be of such a nature as to warrant deposition; but errors ought to be carefully considered whether they strike at the vitals of religion, and are industriously spread, or whether they arise from the weakness of the human understanding, and are not likely to do much injury. (F. G. 200.) See Art. 91 and 86. For trial see Art. 60–150.

333. *If the Presbytery find* on trial that the matter complained of amounts to no more than such acts of infirmity as may be amended, so that little or nothing remains to hinder the minister's usefulness, it shall take all prudent means to remove the scandal. (F. G. 201.)

334. *When a minister pending* a trial shall make a confession, if the matter be base and flagitious, such as drunkenness, uncleanness or crime of a higher nature, however penitent he may appear to the satisfaction of all, the court shall, without delay, suspend him from the exercise of his office, or depose him from the ministry. (F. G. 202.) See suspension.

335. *Confession before a committee.* See Art. 77–89.

336. *If a minister accused* of an offence, having been twice duly cited, shall refuse to appear before Presbytery, he shall be immediately suspended, and if after another citation he still refuse to attend, he shall be deposed as contumacious, and suspended or excommunicated from the church. Record shall be made of the judgment and of the charges under which he was arraigned, and the sentence shall be made public. (F. G. 199.) See Art. 329, 337.

337. *When a minister* is suspended, it shall be left to the discretion of the Presbytery whether the sentence shall include the dissolution of the pastoral relation. (F. G. 204.)

338. *A suspended minister* cannot exercise any function of a minister. (1825.) He does not rank as a common Christian in good standing. (1821.) His name should be kept on Presbyterial roll. (1847, 1882.) See Art. 134, 135 and 374.

339. *When a minister* is deposed his church shall be declared vacant. (F. G. 204.)

340. *A minister may be removed* from office by the Presbytery without process, by special proceeding, to-wit:

Whenever a minister of the gospel shall habitually fail to be engaged in the regular discharge of his official functions, it shall be the duty of the Presbytery, at a stated meeting, to inquire into the cause of such dereliction, and, if necessary, to institute judicial proceedings against him for breach of his covenant engagement. If it shall appear that his neglect proceeds only from his want of acceptance to the church, Presbytery may, upon the same principle upon which it withdraws license from a probationer for want of evidence of the divine call, divest him of his office without censure, even against his will, a majority of two-thirds being necessary for this purpose.

In such a case the clerk shall, under the order of the Presbytery, forthwith deliver to the individual concerned a written notice, that at the next stated meeting the question of his being so dealt with is to be considered. This notice shall distinctly state the grounds for this proceeding.

The party thus notified shall be heard in his own defence, and if the decision pass against him, he may appeal, as if he had been tried after the usual form.

This principle may apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to ruling elders and deacons. (F. G. 205.)

A minister of the gospel, against whom there are no charges, if fully satisfied in his own con-

science that God has not called him to the ministry, or if he has satisfactory evidence of his inability to serve the church with acceptance, may report these facts at a stated meeting. At the next meeting, if, after full deliberation, the Presbytery shall concur with him in judgment, it may divest him of his office without censure, and shall assign him membership in some particular church.

This provision shall in like manner apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the case of ruling elders and deacons, but in such cases the Session of the church to which the elder or deacon who seeks dismission belong shall act as the Presbytery acts in similar cases where a minister is concerned. (F. G. 236.) See Art. 40.

341. *He may be suspended* without process where he is deemed unsound in mind and irresponsible for his words and conduct (1878.)

342. *How restored by Presbytery.*—A minister suspended or deposed for scandalous conduct shall not be restored, even on the deepest sorrow for his sin, until he shall exhibit for a considerable time such an eminently exemplary, humble and edifying walk and conversation as shall heal the wound made by his scandal.

And a deposed minister shall in no case be restored until it shall appear that the general sentiment of the church is strongly in his favor, and demands his restoration, and then only by the court inflicting the censure, or with its consent. (F. G. 203.)

In proceeding to restore a suspended or deposed minister, it is the duty of the Presbytery to exercise great caution—first, admitting him to the sacraments, if he has been debarred from the same; afterwards granting him the privilege of preaching for a season on probation, so as to test the sincerity of his repentance and the prospect of his usefulness, and finally restoring him to his office. But the case shall always be *sub judice* until the sentence of restoration shall be pronounced. (F. G. 233.)

343. *A higher court* cannot direct Presbytery to restore a minister in a different manner from that prescribed by the book in F. G. 203. (1880.)

344. *Where deposed* or demitted from office and restored, must be re-ordained. (1824.) But see Art. 30, 33–34, 149.

The name of an indefinitely suspended minister and the fact of his suspension must be reported to the Assembly by the Presbytery. (1894.)

MINISTERS OF THE WORD.

345. *Titles.*—This office is the first in the church, both for dignity and usefulness. The person who fills it has in the Scriptures different titles expressive of his various duties. As he has oversight of the flock of Christ, he is termed Bishop; as he feeds them with spiritual food, he is termed Pastor; as he serves Christ in the church, he is termed Minister; as it is his duty to be grave and prudent and an example

to the flock, and to govern well in the house and kingdom of Christ, he is termed Presbyter or Elder; as he is the messenger of God, he is termed Angel of the Church; as he is sent to declare the will of God to sinners, and to beseech them to be reconciled to God through Christ, he is termed Ambassador; as he bears the glad tidings of salvation to the ignorant and perishing, he is termed Evangelist; as he stands to proclaim the gospel, he is termed Preacher; as he expounds the word, and, by sound doctrine, both exhorts and convinces the gainsayer, he is termed Teacher; as he dispenses the manifold grace of God and the ordinances instituted by Christ, he is termed Steward of the Mysteries of God. These titles do not indicate different grades of office, but all describe one and the same officer. (F. G. 35.)

346. *Qualification.*—He that fills this office should possess a competency of human learning and be blameless in life, sound in the faith, and apt to teach; he should exhibit a sobriety and holiness of conversation becoming the gospel; he should rule his own house well, and should have a good report of them that are without. (F. G. 36.)

347. *Variety of Work.*—As the Lord has given different gifts to the ministers of the word, and has committed to them various works to execute, the church is authorized to call and appoint them to labor as pastors, teachers and evangelists, and in such other works as may be

needful to the church, according to the gifts in which they excel. (F. G. 37.)

348. *His duty as Pastor.*—When a minister is called to labor as pastor, it belongs to his office to pray for and with his flock as the mouth of the people unto God; to feed the flock by reading, expounding and preaching the word; to direct the congregation in singing the praises of God; to administer the sacraments; to bless the people from God; to catechise the children and youth; to visit officially the people, devoting especial attention to the poor, the sick, the afflicted, and the dying, and, with the other elders, to exercise the joint power of government. (F. G. 38.)

349. *Benedictions* are not simply prayers; are to be pronounced by ministers only. (1881, Comp. F. G. 24 and 38. Art. 349.)

PRESBYTERY'S POWERS CONTINUED—TO SET APART EVANGELISTS TO THEIR PROPER WORK. (F. G. 77.)

350. *Evangelist.*—When a minister is appointed to the work of the evangelist he is commissioned to preach the word and administer the sacraments in foreign countries, frontier settlements, or the destitute parts of the church; and to him may be intrusted power to organize churches and ordain ruling elders and deacons therein. (F. G. 40, 16, 366.)

351. *Presbytery should be cautious* and select very discreet men because of their extraordinary powers. (1876.)

352. *He is a member* of Presbytery appointing him, though resident in a foreign field. (1876.)

If he become unsound, etc., must be dealt with by Presbytery. Assembly's committee may refuse his support and report him to Presbytery. (1876.) In case of such information given by committee to Presbytery, the whole proceedings of the Presbytery shall be entered upon the committee's records, so as to give a complete history of the case. (1884.)

353. *The churches organized* by him in a foreign field are not under jurisdiction of his Presbytery or Assembly, but are freeborn, and may form their own courts. (1876.) See Alex. *Digest*, Sec. 99.

354. *Vacant Churches.*—Presbyteries to take special oversight of. (F. G. 77.)

Presbyteries are enjoined to group their vacant churches and put them under the charge of evangelists, obtaining, of course, the consent of the churches, and to require such churches to contribute regularly, according to their means, to the support of the gospel, as an essential condition of having the gospel preached to them. (M. A., 1870, 1871, 1881.) See also 1889.

The relation of stated supply is not recognized in our form of government. The Assembly therefore recommends that the vacant churches be grouped as soon as practicable into pastoral charges or into fields, under the care of the evangelist. (1889.)

The Assembly, in the exercise of its superintending jurisdiction, in view of the great number of vacant churches, recommends each Presbytery to take steps to assign each vacant church in their respective bounds to the care of some minister, whose duty it shall be to take charge of such congregation, supply them with week-day preaching, moderate the Session, and take the spiritual oversight of the congregation until a minister can be regularly employed, due care being taken with reference to expediency. (1889.)

Assembly's Committee of Home Missions is a bureau of information as to unemployed ministers, and Presbyteries are required to co-operate by furnishing said committee with names of unemployed ministers and vacant churches. (1894.)

Note.—The Northern Presbyterian Assembly required its Presbyteries to keep a list of its unemployed ministers and vacant churches, and to require each vacant church in its narrative to report the amount which it is able to raise for the support of a minister, and that Presbytery, through its Home Commissioner, shall appoint, during the next six months, ministers from those without charges, to supply said vacant churches, in regular rotation, but so that the same minister shall not occupy the same pulpit on successive Sabbaths.

That the Presbytery shall decide what amount shall be paid per week for these supplies. That from the list shall be deducted those ministers

who have obtained leave to labor out of its bounds and those churches which have obtained leave to employ supplies. (1880.)

355. *Presbytery has power* to require ministers to devote themselves diligently to their sacred calling, and to censure delinquents. (F. G. 77, 205.) See Art. 329.

356. *When a minister* is appointed to be a teacher in a school of divinity, or to give instruction in the doctrines and duties of religion to youth assembled in a college or university, it appertains to his office to take a pastoral oversight of those committed to his charge and be diligent in sowing the seed of the word and gathering in the fruit thereof, as one who watches for souls. (F. G. 39.)

When a minister is called to labor through the press, or in any other like needed work, it shall be incumbent on him to make full proof of his ministry by disseminating the gospel for the edification of the church. (F. G. 41.)

357. *Presbytery has power* to see that the lawful injunctions of the higher courts are obeyed. (F. G. 77.)

In case they are not obeyed, the superior court may institute process. See Art. 256–'59.

The Presbyteries are instructed to apportion among its churches what they deem equitable amounts of the sums to be raised for the various causes, and to take such other steps as to them seem best to bring the churches nearer to their duty and to enjoin upon pastors, elders

and deacons to bring fully before the members the needs of the various causes, so as to reach every member, and to encourage the formation of Home and Foreign Missionary Societies. (1889.)

Presbyteries enjoined to require church failing to contribute to any of the causes of beneficence to give the reasons for such failure. (1891.)

Church courts (Synod) have no power to enjoin an assessment for the Assembly's causes of benevolence. (1892.)

358. *Presbytery has power* to condemn erroneous opinions which injure the purity or peace of the church. (F. G. 77.)

359. *Presbytery has power* to visit churches for the purpose of inquiring into or redressing the evils that have arisen in them. (F. G. 77.)

Presbytery has the right to visit churches and redress the evils therein without the request of the Session. (North, 1869.)

Has power to dissolve the relation between a particular church and its ruling elders without petition and without prejudice. (1894.)

And may thus order an elder to cease acting as such. (North, 1869.)

This visitation may be made by the body itself, or by a committee or commission. If by a committee, its powers are fixed by the Presbytery. The evils are to be corrected through the Session. Hodge's *What is Presbyterian Law?* (232.)

In case, however, of the disability of the Session Presbytery becomes the original court. See F. G. 1, Art. 64.

A higher court may direct the Presbytery to visit its churches. (1871.)

360. *Presbytery has power* to unite or divide churches at the request of the members thereof. (F. G. 77.)

It may be divided at the request of a minority, though the majority object. (1848.)

361. *Presbytery has power* to form and receive new churches. (F. G. 77.)

It belongs to the Presbytery to organize a church. (1833.)

It may prohibit the organization. (1708.)

362. A church may withdraw from Presbytery and become independent. (1862.)

The proper course is for it to ask the consent of Presbytery. (1867.)

363. *To receive bodies* suited to become constituents thereof and lying in its geographical bounds, when authorized by General Assembly. (F. G. 90.)

364. *To concert measures* for the enlargement of the church within its bounds. (F. G. 77.)

365. *In general to order* whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches under its care. (F. G. 77.)

Each Presbytery shall appoint a superintendent of Sabbath-schools or a permanent com-

mittee, whose special duty it shall be to promote the Sabbath-school work. (1880.)

Presbyteries recommended to devote one day of their spring or fall sessions to the holding of a Sabbath school convention or institute, under a programme previously prepared by the presbyterial committee. (1886.)

Each Presbytery advised to appoint a standing superintendent of Sabbath schools, whose business it shall be by correspondence, and it may be by visitation, to ascertain the condition of the schools, stimulate the diligence of those in charge of them, collect the statistics, and, with the assistance of the committee or Presbytery, may appoint and prepare reports for the General Assembly. (1887.)

Presbytery should instruct Sessions to use our own standards and literature in Sabbath-schools. (1880, 1884.)

Should appoint standing committee for American Bible Society and collections therefor. (1891.)

Should, through its committee, apportion among its churches the collections for Home Missions. (1891.)

Presbytery has power "to review the record of church Sessions, to redress whatever they may have done contrary to order, and to take effectual care that they observe the constitution of the church." (F. G. 77.)

366. *To appoint commissioners* to the General Assembly. (F. G. 77.) See Art. 378–381.

The ruling elder appointed must be an act-

ing elder in the bounds of the Presbytery, not necessarily a sitting member of that Session appointing. (1890.)

367. *To propose to Synod* or to the Assembly such measures as may be of common advantage to the church at large. (F. G. 77.)

This right of overture seems to belong to each and every individual member of the church. Private members may overture the Assembly on any subject. See M. A., 1878.

Should ordinarily be sent to Synod, except where special action of the Assembly seems necessary or called for. (1894.)

368. *Shall keep a full and fair record* of its proceedings and send it up to the Synod annually for review. (F. G. 78. Art. 54, 55.)

369. *It shall report to Synod* and the General Assembly every year:

1. The condition and progress of religion within its bounds during the year.

2. All the important changes which may have taken place, such as—

The licensures.

The ordination.

The receiving or dismissing of members.

The removal of members by death.

The union and division of churches and the formation of new ones. (F. G. 78.)

Ministers indefinitely suspended must be reported to Assembly. (1894.)

Every Presbytery, in its statistical reports, shall place on a supplementary roll, to be pub-

lished with the remainder of the reports in the Minutes of the General Assembly, the names of all ordained missionaries, who, being sent out by it, are still engaged in our foreign missionary work, but who, by joining union Presbyteries in harmony with the reformed doctrine and Presbyterian polity, have severed their former membership with the home Presbytery. (1889.)

[*Remark.*—Item 1 above is called the narrative, and is generally prepared by the Standing Committee on Narrative at each meeting of the Presbytery and adopted by the Presbytery. It should be signed by the stated clerk. Item 2 is made by the stated clerk of Presbytery, and is called the report.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE SYNOD.

370. *Synod* consists of all the ministers and one ruling elder from each church in a district comprising at least three Presbyteries.

371. *The qualifications* for membership in the Synod and Presbytery are the same. (F. G. 81.)

[*Remark.*—The question of the power of Synod to judge of the qualifications of its members, which was a cause of much controversy in the history of the church, seems to be settled by the last sentence of the above paragraph, as it is not contained in the old book.]

The N. S. Assembly, in 1849, decided that Synod acted unconstitutionally in rejecting a member of one of its Presbyteries.

In 1869 the O. S. Assembly, North, decided likewise.

The same rule as to visiting brethren and corresponding members which is laid down. (F. G. 83. Art. 267, 269)

372. *Formation of Synods.*

The erection of new Synods belongs to the powers of the General Assembly. (Art. 388, h.)

373. *Quorum of Synod consists of* any seven ministers belonging to it, who shall convene at the time and place of meeting with at least three ruling elders, which shall be a quorum; provided not more than three of said ministers belong to one Presbytery. (F. G. 82.)

Acts of less than a quorum. See Art. 272.

374. *Its meetings.*

The Synod shall meet at least once a year. (F. G. 82.)

The Moderator has no power to change the time fixed for a regular meeting (1829), but may do so where a quorum does not assemble within a reasonable time. (1796.) See Art. 391.

Pro re nata meetings may be called by the Moderator when a synodical quorum request him to or concur with him. (1893.)

a. How made.

By Moderator giving notice to the Moderator of each Presbytery, and it is their duty to apprise other members. (1796.)

b. Notwithstanding these decisions, it seems to be customary to petition the General Assembly to order synodical meetings in case of failure of the regular meetings. (1842, 1862, 1873, North. M. A. 1864, 1865, 1873, 1874, and 1879.)

A business session on the Sabbath excepted to. (1886, R. and C.)

375. *Powers of Synod.*

c. The Synod has power to receive and issue appeals, complaints and references regularly brought up from the Presbyteries.

2. To review the records of the Presbyteries and redress whatever they may have done contrary to order.

3. To take effectual care that they observe the constitution of the church, and that they obey the lawful injunction of the higher courts.

4. To erect new Presbyteries and unite or divide those which were before erected. See Art. 265.

5. To appoint ministers to such work proper to their office as may fall under its own particular jurisdiction.

6. In general, to take such order with respect to the Presbyteries, Sessions and churches under its care as may be in conformity with the word of God and the established rules, and may tend to promote the edification of the church.

7. To concert measures for promoting the prosperity and enlargement of the church within its bounds.

8. And finally to propose to the General As-

sembly such measures as may be of common advantage to the whole church. (F. G. 84.)

376. *Synodical minutes.*

It shall be the duty of the Synod to, (*a*), keep full, fair records of its proceedings; (*b*), to submit them annually to the inspection of the General Assembly; (*c*), and to report to it the number of its Presbyteries and of the members thereof; (*d*), and in general all important changes which may have occurred within its bounds during the year. (F. G. 85.)

See Minutes, Art. 54, 55.

Narrative and statistical reports to Assembly must be recorded. (1885.)

Minutes must be signed by clerk. (1885.)

CHAPTER III.

OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

377. *The General Assembly* is the highest court of this church, and represents in one body all the churches thereof. It bears the title of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and constitutes the bond of union, peace and correspondence among all its congregations and courts. (F. G. 86.)

378. *Its members.*

Shall consist of commissioners from the Presbyteries in the following proportions, viz.: Every Presbytery shall be entitled to send one minister and one ruling elder; but if it consists of

more than twenty-four ministerial members, it shall send an additional minister and ruling elder. (F. G. 87.)

There is no provision for a Presbytery to send more than four commissioners, even though it consists of forty-eight ministers. (1894.)

379. *If a Presbytery appoint* a larger number of representatives than it is entitled to, those last appointed shall be rejected. (1835.)

380. *Form of appointment of commissioner.* Each commissioner, before his name shall be enrolled as a member of the Assembly, shall produce from his Presbytery a commission under the hand of the Moderator and clerk in the following or like form, viz :

The Presbytery of —— being met at —— on the —— day of ——, doth hereby appoint A. B., minister (or ruling elder, as the case may be), and in case of his absence C. D., minister (or ruling elder, as the case may be), to be a commissioner, on behalf of this Presbytery, to the next General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, to meet at —— on the —— day of ——, A. D. ——, or wherever and whenever the said Assembly happens to sit, to consult, vote and determine on all things that may come before that body, according to the principles and constitution of this church and the word of God. And of his diligence herein he is to render an account at his return.

Signed by order of the Presbytery.

—— ——, *Moderator.*

—— ——, *Clerk.* (F. G. 88.)

381. *Quorum of.*
Any eighteen of these commissioners, of whom one-half shall be ministers and at least five shall be ruling elders, being met on the day and at the place appointed, shall be a quorum for the transaction of business. (F. G. 89.)

382. *Its meetings.*
The General Assembly shall meet at least annually. (F. G. 87.)

383. *Its jurisdiction* is over such matters as concern the whole church. (F. G. 62.)

384. *Its power.* (F. G. 90.)
(*a*), To receive and issue all appeals, references and complaints regularly brought before it from the inferior courts.
(*b*), To bear testimony against error in doctrine and immorality in practice, injuriously affecting the church.
(*c*), To decide in all controversies respecting doctrine and discipline.
(*d*), To give its advice and instruction, in conformity with the constitution, in all cases submitted to it.
Individuals as well as Presbyteries and Synods have a right to send overtures to the Assembly. (1878.)
The deliverances of Assembly may be sent directly to the Presbyteries. (1878.)
Deliverances are not all merely didactic, advisory and monitory. (1879.) See Art. 63 f.
(*e*), To review records of Synods. See records.

(*f*), To take care that the inferior courts observe the constitution and redress whatever they may have done contrary to order.

(*g*), To concert measures for promoting the prosperity and enlargement of the church. (F. G. 90.)

This is done through the following committees chiefly:

Executive Committee of Home Missions, embracing Church Erection, Sustentation (aiding feeble churches), Evangelistic and Colored Evangelists, Invalid Ministers and their widows and orphans.

Education for the Ministry.

Foreign Missions.

Publication.

[*Remark.*—These committees are appointed by the General Assembly, and are required to report annually to the General Assembly, and their acts are subject to approval of the Assembly.]

(*h*), To erect new Synods, institute and superintend the agencies necessary in the general work of evangelization.

The secretaries of the various executive committees have the privilege of corresponding members of the Assembly. (M. A.)

The treasurers of these committees are required to give bond and to give an itemized report of their receipts and disbursements. (M. A.)

(*i*), To appoint ministers to such labors as fall under its jurisdiction.

(*j*), To suppress schismatical contentions and disputations, according to the rules provided therefor.

(*k*), To receive under its jurisdiction, with the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries, other ecclesiastical bodies whose organization is conformed to the doctrine and order of this church.

(*l*), To authorize Synods and Presbyteries to exercise a similar power in receiving bodies suitable to become constituents of those courts and lying within their geographical bounds respectively.

(*m*), To superintend the affairs of the whole church.

(*n*), To correspond with other churches.

(*o*), And in general to recommend measures for the promotion of charity, truth and holiness through all the churches under its care. (F. G. 90.) See Art. 261.

385. The whole business of the Assembly being finished, and the vote taken for dissolving the present Assembly, the Moderator shall say from the chair:

"By virtue of the authority delegated to me by the church, let this General Assembly be dissolved, and I do hereby dissolve it, and require another General Assembly, chosen in the same manner, to meet at —— on the —— day of —— A. D. ——. After which he shall pray and return thanks and pronounce, or cause to be pronounced, on those present the apostolic benediction. (F. G. 91.)

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE MODERATOR AND PARLIAMENTARY RULES.

386. (*a*), *The pastor* is (for prudential reasons, 1888) Moderator of the Session. (F. G. 54.) See Art. 42–45.

386. (*b*), *The Moderator of the Presbytery*, the Synod and the General Assembly shall be chosen at each stated meeting of these courts; and the Moderator, or in case of his absence, the last Moderator present, or the oldest minister in attendance, shall (except as hereinbefore provided, 1888) open the next meeting with a sermon, unless it be highly inconvenient, and shall hold the chair until a new Moderator be chosen. *Provided*, however, that when the Moderator of one of the higher courts is a ruling elder, the preaching of the opening sermon, or any other official duty (the performance of which requires exercise of functions pertaining only to the teaching elder) shall be remitted by him for execution to such minister of the word, being a member of the court, as he may select. (F. G. 54.)

387. *The Moderator possesses* all authority necessary for the preservation of order and for convening and adjourning the court, according to his own ruling. He may also, on any extraordinary emergency, convene the court by his circular letter before the ordinary time of meeting.

And in case of the failure of the appointed meeting, he may convene the court at a suitable time and place. (F. G. 55.)

388. It is proper that the pastor should be Moderator of the congregational meetings, except when the subject to be considered prevents him, from motives of delicacy, from presiding. (1876.)

RULES OF PARLIAMENTARY ORDER.

389. These rules do not form a part of the constitution, but were adopted by the Assembly, and are in general use in Presbytery.

Of opening the Session.

1. The Moderator shall take the chair precisely at the hour to which the court stands adjourned; shall immediately call the members to order; and, on the appearance of a quorum, the Session shall be opened with prayer.

2. If a quorum be assembled at the hour appointed, and the Moderator be absent, the last Moderator or oldest minister present shall take the chair without delay.

3. If a quorum be not assembled at the hour appointed, any two members shall be competent to adjourn from time to time, that an opportunity may be given for a quorum to assemble.

4. After calling the roll and marking the absentees, the minutes of the last sitting shall be read, and if requisite corrected.

Of the Moderator. See Art. 386.

5. It shall be the duty of the Moderator to preserve order, and to conduct all business before the court to a speedy and proper result.

6. He is to propose to the court every subject of deliberation that comes before it.

7. He may propose what appears to him the most regular and direct way of bringing any business to issue.

8. He shall always announce the names of members rising to speak, prevent them from interrupting each other and require them in speaking always to address the chair.

9. He shall prevent a speaker from deviating from the subject, and from using personal reflections.

10. He shall silence those who refuse to obey order.

11. He shall prevent members from leaving the court without his permission.

12. He shall, when the deliberations are ended, put the question and call the vote.

13. In all questions he shall give a clear and concise statement of the object of vote, and the vote being taken, he shall declare how the question is decided.

14. He shall carefully keep notes of the orders of the day, and call them up at the times appointed.

15. He may speak to points of order in preference to other members, rising from his seat for that purpose, and shall decide questions of

order subject to an appeal to the court without debate, by any two members.

16. If any member consider himself aggrieved by a decision of the Moderator, it shall be his privilege to appeal to the court, and the question on such appeal shall be taken without debate.

17. It is his duty to appoint all committees, except in those cases in which the court shall decide otherwise.

18. When a vote is taken by ballot, or by yeas and nays, he shall vote with the other members; in other cases, when the court is equally divided, he shall possess the casting vote. If he be not willing to decide he shall put the question a second time, and if the court be again equally divided and he decline to give his vote, the question shall be lost. See Art. 115.

19. He may call any member to the chair to preside temporarily.

Of the Clerk.

20. As soon as possible after the commencement of the first session of every court, the clerk shall form a complete roll of the members present, and put the same into the hands of the Moderator; and whenever any additional members take their seats, he shall add their names in their proper places to the said roll.

21. He shall immediately file all papers in the order in which they have been read, with proper indorsements, and keep them in perfect order.

Of the order of business.

22. After the reading of the minutes of the preceding day, the following order of business shall be observed:

First.—The receiving of—

a. Communications addressed to the body.

b. Reports of standing committees.

c. Reports of select committees.

d. Resolutions, each of which papers may, by unanimous consent, be taken up immediately on presentation, but if objection be made it shall be docketed.

Secondly.—The unfinished business in which the court was engaged at the last preceding adjournment, in preference to orders of the day; but such unfinished business may, on motion, without debate, be laid on the table to proceed with the special order.

Thirdly.—As soon as the special order and the unfinished business are disposed of, the business on the docket will be called, but motions to elect officers, to appoint committees, and to enroll members, shall always be in order, unless a member is speaking or the court is voting.

Of motions.

23. A motion must be seconded, and afterwards repeated by Moderator or read aloud before it is debated; but this shall be no bar to explanation of the object of any motion by the mover, provided it does not exceed five minutes, and every motion shall be reduced to writing if the Moderator or any member require it.

24. The mover of a resolution is entitled to the floor, if he so desire, after the Moderator has stated the question.

Of withdrawal of motion.

25. Any member who shall have made a motion shall have liberty to withdraw it with the consent of his second, before any debate has taken place thereon, but not afterward without the leave of the court.

Of limitations of debate.

26. Motions to lay on the table, to docket, to take up business and to adjourn, and the call for the question, shall be put without debate. On questions of order, postponement or commitment, no member shall speak more than once. On all other questions, each member may speak twice, but not oftener, without express leave of the court.

Of privileged questions.

27. *a.* When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received unless to adjourn, to docket, to lay on the table, to amend, to postpone indefinitely, to postpone to a day certain, or to commit; which several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are herein arranged; and the motion for adjournment shall always be in order.

Protracted and unprofitable debate.

27. *b. Resolved*, That it is the mind of this General Assembly that rule 27 of the general

rules was never intended to deprive the General Assembly of the right to protect itself against wearisome, protracted, and unprofitable debate, and therefore it will be in order at any time for a member to move a limitation of speeches, and the Moderator to propose the same to the house under rule 7 of general rules. Adopted. 1886, page 40.

Of "the question."

28. When any member shall call for the "question," the Moderator shall, without debate, put the vote: "Is the court ready for the question?" If the call be seconded by a majority of the members present, the vote shall immediately be taken on the pending question, whatever it may be, without further debate.

Of division of the question.

29. If a motion under debate contains several parts, any two members may have it divided, and a question taken on each part.

Of amendments.

30. An amendment may be moved on any question, as also an amendment to the amendment, which shall be decided before the original proposition; but two distinct amendments to the pending question shall not be entertained at the same time, whether moved as substitutes for the whole matter or as changing any part thereof.

31. One proposition may be substituted for another when the substitute covers the whole

matter of the original, and this shall be done by moving to strike out the original and to insert the substitute.

Of reconsideration.

32. A question shall not be reconsidered at the same session of the court at which it has been decided, unless by the consent of a majority of the members who were present at the decision, and unless the motion to reconsider be made by a person who voted with the majority.

33. A subject which has been indefinitely postponed, shall not be again called up during the same session of the court unless by consent of three-fourths of the members present at the decision.

Of speakers.

34. If more than one member rise to speak at the same time the one who is most distant from the Moderator's chair shall speak first.

35. Every member, while speaking, shall address himself to the Moderator, and shall treat his fellow members, and especially the Moderator, with decorum and respect.

Of Interruptions.

36. No speaker shall be interrupted, unless he be out of order, or for the purpose of correcting mistakes or misrepresentations.

Of Voting.

37. Members shall not decline voting, unless excused by the court.

38. When various motions are made with respect to the filling of blanks with particular numbers or times, the question shall always be taken first on the highest number and the longest time.

39. When the Moderator has commenced taking the vote, no further debate or remark shall be admitted, unless there has evidently been a mistake; in which case the mistake shall be rectified, and the Moderator shall recommence taking the vote.

40. The yeas and nays on any question shall not be recorded, unless it is required by one-third of the members present; and every member shall vote "yea" or "nay," unless excused by the court. In a judicial case members thus excused shall not be allowed a vote in any of the subsequent proceedings relating thereto.

41. In all elections it shall require a majority of the vote cast to elect.

Of Committees.

42. The person first named on any committee shall be considered as the chairman thereof, whose duty it shall be to convene the committee and preside therein; and in case of his absence, or inability to act, the second named member shall take his place and perform his duties.

Of Private Sessions.

43. All courts have a right to sit in private on business, which, in their judgment, ought not to be of public speculation.

Of the Committee of the Whole.

44. Every court has the right to resolve itself into a committee of the whole, or to hold what are commonly called interlocutory meetings, in which members may freely converse together without the formalities necessary in their ordinary proceedings. In all such cases the Moderator shall name the member who is to preside as chairman. If the committee be unable to agree, a motion may be made that the committee rise, and upon the adoption of such motion the Moderator shall resume the chair, and the chairman of the committee shall report what has been done, and ask that the committee be discharged, which being allowed, the matter shall be dropped. If the committee shall agree upon the report to be made, or have made progress in the same without coming to a conclusion, the committee may rise, report what has been done, and if the case require, may ask leave to sit again; or the committee of the whole may be dissolved, and the question considered by the court in the usual order of business.

The Committee of Prosecution.

45. But in cases of process on the ground of general rumor where there is, of course, no particular accuser, there may be a committee appointed (if convenient), who shall be called the Committee of Prosecution, and who shall conduct the whole cause on the part of the prosecution. The members of this committee shall not be allowed to sit in judgment in the case. See Art. 72.

Of Decorum.

46. Without express permission, no member of a court, while business is going on, shall engage in private conversation, nor shall members address one another, nor any person present, but through the Moderator.

47. When more than three members of the court shall be standing at the same time, the Moderator shall require all to take their seats, the person only excepted who may be speaking.

48. If any member act in any respect in a disorderly manner, it shall be the privilege of any member, and the duty of the Moderator, to call him to order.

49. All expressions of approbation or disapprobation, by clapping of hands, or stamping, or any audible applause, shall be considered disorderly. (Adopted 1874, Min. p. 496)

50. No member shall retire from the court without the leave of the Moderator, nor withdraw from it to return home without the consent of the court.

Of Cases Unprovided For.

51. All cases that may arise not provided for in the foregoing rules shall be governed by the general principles of parliamentary law.

Of Closing the Session.

52. The Moderator of every court above the church Session, in finally closing the Session, in addition to prayer, may cause to be sung an appropriate psalm or hymn, and shall pronounce the apostolic benediction.

OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH.

390. The constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States consists of its doctrinal symbols embraced in the Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, together with the Book of Church Order, which comprises the Form of Government, the Rules of Discipline, and the Directory of Worship. (F. G. 141.)

391. The Book of Church Order may be amended on the recommendation of one General Assembly when a majority of the Presbyteries advise and consent thereunto, and a succeeding General Assembly shall enact the same. (F. G. 142.)

The following amendment was enacted by the General Assembly of 1884:

392. Amendments to the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this church may be made only upon the recommendation of one General Assembly, the concurrence of at least three fourths of the Presbyteries, and the enactment of the same by a subsequent Assembly.

The following was enacted by the General Assembly of 1886:

The provision contained in the preceding paragraph for the amendment of the Book of Church Order shall not apply to this paragraph; but this paragraph shall be amended or altered only in the way in which itself provides for the amendment of the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Church. (F. G., Chap. VII.

CHAPTER V.

OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

393. *The ordinances* established by Christ, the head, in his church, are prayer, singing praises, reading, expounding and preaching the word of God; administering the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, public solemn fasting and thanksgiving, catechising, making offerings for the relief of the poor and for other pious uses, exercising discipline and blessing the people. (F. G. 24.)

394. *The reading of the Holy Scriptures* in the congregation is a part of the public worship of God, and ought to be performed by the minister or some other authorized person.

The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament shall be read from the most approved translation, in the vulgar tongue, that all may hear and understand.

How large a portion shall be read at once is left to the discretion of every minister; and he may, when he thinks it expedient, expound any part of what is read, always having regard to the time, that neither reading, singing, praying, preaching, nor any other ordinance, be disproportionate the one to the other; nor the whole rendered too short or too tedious. (D. W., Chap. III.)

The preaching of the word being an institution of God for the salvation of men, great attention should be paid to the manner of per-

forming it. Every minister ought to give diligent application to it; and endeavor to prove himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The subject of a sermon should be some verse or verses of Scripture and its object, to explain, defend and apply some part of the system of divine truth, or to point out the nature, and state the bounds and obligations of some duty. A text should not be merely a motto, but should fairly contain the doctrine proposed to be handled. It is proper also that large portions of Scripture be sometimes expounded, and particularly improved, for the instruction of the people, in the meaning and use of the sacred oracles.

The method of preaching requires much study, meditation and prayer; ministers ought, in general, to prepare their sermons with care, and not to indulge themselves in loose extemporary harangues, nor to serve God with that which cost them naught. They ought, however, to keep to the simplicity of the gospel, expressing themselves in language agreeable to Scripture, and adapted to the understanding of the meanest of their hearers, carefully avoiding ostentation, either of gifts or learning. They ought also to adorn, by their lives, the doctrines which they teach, and to be examples to believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

As one primary design of public ordinances is to pay social acts of homage to the most high

God, ministers ought to be careful not to make their sermons so long as to interfere with or exclude the important duties of prayer and praise, but preserve a just proportion between the several parts of public worship.

The sermon being ended, the minister is to pray and return thanks to Almighty God; then let a psalm or hymn be sung, and those assembled dismissed with the apostolic benediction. It is both a privilege and a duty plainly enjoined in Scripture to make regular, systematic and liberal offerings for the support of religion and for the propagation of the gospel in our own and in foreign lands, as well as for the relief of the poor. This should be done as an exercise of grace and an act of worship, and at such time during the service as may be deemed expedient by the Session.

It is expedient that no person be introduced to preach in any of the churches under our care without the consent of the pastor or church Session, unless sent by the Presbytery. (D. W., Chap. VI.)

395. *Of the singing of Psalms and Hymns.* It is the duty of Christians to praise God by singing psalms or hymns publicly in the church, as also privately in the family.

In singing the praises of God we are to sing with the Spirit and with the understanding also, making melody in our hearts to the Lord. It is also proper that we cultivate some knowledge of the rules of music, that we may praise God in a becoming manner with our voices as

well as with our hearts. The whole congregation should be furnished with books, and ought to join in this part of the worship.

The proportion of the time of public worship to be spent in singing is left to the prudence of every minister; and it is recommended that this part of divine service be conducted in such a manner as to encourage congregational singing. (D. W., Chap. IV.) Session is to take the oversight of singing in public worship. (F. G. 67.)

396. *Of Public Prayer.*—It seems very proper to begin the public worship of the sanctuary by a short prayer, humbly adoring the infinite majesty of the living God, expressing a sense of our distance from him as creatures and our unworthiness as sinners, and humbly imploring his gracious presence, the assistance of his Holy Spirit in the duties of his worship, and his acceptance of us through the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Then, after singing a psalm or hymn, it is proper that, before the sermon, there should be a full and comprehensive prayer. *First*, adoring the glory and perfections of God, as they are made known to us in the works of creation, in the conduct of providence, and in the clear and full revelation he hath made of himself in his written word. *Second*, giving thanks to him for all his mercies of every kind, general and particular, spiritual and temporal, common and special; above all, for Christ Jesus, his unspeakable gift, the hope of eternal life through

him, and for the mission and work of the Holy Spirit. *Third*, making humble confession of sin, both original and actual; acknowledging and endeavoring to impress the mind of every worshipper with a deep sense of the evil of all sin, as such, as being a departure from the living God; and also taking a particular and affecting view of the various fruits which proceed from this root of bitterness; as sins against God, our neighbor and ourselves; sins in thought, in word, and in deed; sins accidental and habitual; also, the aggravations of sin arising from knowledge, or the means of it; from distinguishing mercies from valuable privileges, from breach of vows, etc. *Fourth*, making earnest supplication for pardon and peace with God through the blood of the atonement, with all its important and happy fruits; for the Spirit of sanctification and abundant supplies of the grace that is necessary to the discharge of our duty; for support and comfort under all the trials to which we are liable, as we are sinful and mortal, and for all temporal mercies that may be necessary in our passage through this valley of tears, always remembering to view them as flowing in the channel of covenant love, and intended to be subservient to the preservation and progress of the spiritual life. *Fifth*, pleading from every principle warranted in Scripture; from our own necessity; the all-sufficiency of God; the merit and intercession of our Saviour, and the glory of God in the comfort and happiness of his

people. *Sixth*, intercession and petition for others, including the whole world of mankind, for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh; for the peace, purity, and extension of the church of God; for ministers and missionaries in all lands; for all who are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for the particular church then assembled and all other churches associated in one body with it; for the sick, dying, and bereaved; for the poor and destitute; for strangers; for prisoners; the aged and the young; for those who travel by land and sea; for the community in which the church is situated; for civil rulers, and for whatever else may seem to be necessary or suitable to the occasion. The prominence given each of these topics must be left to the discretion of the minister.

Prayer after sermon ought generally to have a relation to the subject that has been treated of in the discourse, and all other public prayers to the circumstances that gave occasion for them.

It is easy to perceive that in all the preceding directions there is a very great compass and variety, and it is committed to the judgment and fidelity of the officiating pastor to insist chiefly on such parts, or to take in more or less of the several parts as he shall be led to by the aspect of Providence, the particular state of the congregation in which he officiates, or the disposition and exercise of his own heart at the time. But we think it necessary to observe

that, although we do not approve, as is well known, of confining ministers to set or fixed forms of prayer for public worship, yet it is the indispensable duty of every minister, previously to his entering on his office, to prepare and qualify himself for this part of his duty as well as for preaching. He ought, by a thorough acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, by reading the best writers on the subject, by meditation, and by a life of communion with God, to endeavor to acquire both the spirit and the gift of prayer. Not only so, but when he is to enter on particular acts of worship he should endeavor to compose his spirit and to digest his thoughts for prayer, that it may be performed with dignity and propriety as well as to the profit of those who join in it, and that he may not disgrace that important service by mean, irregular, or extravagant effusions.

The posture of the poople in public prayer should always be reverent, and, as far as possible, uniform. The standing posture is sanctioned by Scripture, and is recommended by the practice of the primitive church and by immemorial usage of Presbyterians. (D. W., Chap. V.)

397. *Prayer Meetings.*—Meetings of the congregation for prayer should be held under the direction of the Session. They may be maintained either statedly, where that is possible, or at seasons specially appointed where the scattered condition of the congregation renders stated meetings impracticable. Such

meetings should be conducted by the pastor, some other member of the Session, or any duly qualified member of the church; and the exercises should be prayer, praise, the reading of the Scriptures, and exhortation.

It is earnestly recommended that the male members be encouraged to lead in public prayer, and that they be careful to make their prayers devotional and of a moderate length. (D. W., Chap. VIII.)

398. *Of the Administration of the Lord's Supper.*—The communion, or supper of the Lord, is to be celebrated frequently, but how often may be determined by the Session of each congregation, as they may judge most for edification. The ignorant and scandalous are not to be admitted to the Lord's supper.

It is proper that public notice should be given to the congregation at least the Sabbath before the administration of this ordinance, and that, either then or on some day of the week, the people be instructed in its nature, and a due preparation for it, that all may come in a suitable manner to this holy feast.

When the sermon is ended, the minister shall show "That this is an ordinance of Christ, by reading the words of institution, either from one of the evangelists or from 1 Corinthians xi., which, as to him may appear expedient, he may explain and apply, that it is to be observed in remembrance of Christ, to show forth his death till he come, that it is of inestimable benefit to strengthen his people against sin, to support

them under troubles, to encourage and quicken them in duty, to inspire them with love and zeal, to increase their faith and holy resolution, and to beget peace of conscience and comfortable hopes of eternal life."

He is to warn the profane, the ignorant and scandalous, and those that secretly indulge themselves in any known sin, not to approach the holy table. On the other hand, he shall invite to this holy table such as, sensible of their lost and helpless state of sin, depend upon the atonement of Christ for pardon and acceptance with God; such as, being instructed in the gospel doctrine, have a competent knowledge to discern the Lord's body; and such as desire to renounce their sins, and are determined to lead a holy and godly life.

Since, by our Lord's appointment, this sacrament sets forth the communion of saints, the minister, before the celebration begins, should invite all those who profess the true religion and are communicants in good standing in any evangelical church, to participate in the ordinance. It is proper also to give a special invitation to non-communicants to remain during the service.

The table on which the elements are placed, being decently covered and furnished with bread and wine, and the communicants orderly and gravely sitting around it (or in their seats before it), the elders in a convenient place together, the minister should then set the elements apart by prayer and thanksgiving.

The bread and wine being thus set apart by prayer and thanksgiving, the minister is to take the bread and break it, in the view of the people, saying:

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the same night in which he was betrayed, having taken bread and blessed and broken it, gave it to his disciples, as I, ministering in his name, give this bread unto you, saying (here the bread is to be distributed): Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me."

After having given the bread, he shall take the cup and say:

"After the same manner our Saviour also took the cup, and having given thanks, as hath been done in his name, he gave it to the disciples, saying (while the minister is repeating these words let him give the cup): This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins; drink ye all of it."

For the sake of order it is recommended that the minister be served after the people, and that he then serve the elders.

Since believers are to act personally in all their covenanting with the Lord, it is proper that a part of the time occupied in the distribution of the elements should be spent by all in silent communion, thanksgiving, intercession and prayer.

The minister may, in a few words, put the communicants in mind:

"Of the grace of God, in Jesus Christ, held forth in this sacrament, and of their obligation to be the Lord's; and may exhort them to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called; and, as they have professedly received Christ Jesus the Lord, that they be careful so to walk in him, and to maintain good works."

It may not be improper for the minister to give a word of exhortation also to those who have been only spectators, reminding them:

"Of their duty, stating their sin and danger by living in disobedience to Christ, in neglecting this holy ordinance, and calling upon them to be earnest in making preparation for attending upon it at the next time of its celebration."

Then the minister is to pray and give thanks to God:

"For his rich mercy and invaluable goodness vouchsafed to them in that sacred communion; to implore pardon for the defects of the whole service, and to pray for the acceptance of their persons and performances, for the gracious assistance of the Holy Spirit, to enable them, as they have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so to walk in him; that they may hold fast that which they have received, that no man take their crown, that they may be as becometh the gospel; that they may bear about with them continually the dying of the Lord Jesus; that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in their mortal body; that their light may so shine before men that others seeing their good works may glorify their Father who is in heaven."

399. An offering for the poor, or other sacred purpose, is appropriate in connection with this service, and may be made at such time as shall be ordained by the Session.

Now let a psalm or hymn be sung, and the congregation be dismissed with the following or some other gospel benediction:

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

400. As it has been customary in some parts of our church to observe fast before the Lord's supper, to have a sermon on Saturday and Monday, and to invite two or three ministers on such occasions, and as these seasons have been blessed to many souls, and may tend to keep up a stricter union of ministers and congregations, we think it not improper that they who choose it may continue in this practice. (D. W., Chap. XI.)

401. The proper element is fermented wine, but the use of unfermented does not invalidate. (1892–'93.)

402. *Of the visitation of the sick.*—The miraculous gifts of healing which the Spirit gave to many in the apostles' days are no longer bestowed upon the church; but now,

as of old, we are to ask the blessing of God upon all proper means which are employed for the relief of the sick, remembering that the power of the prayer of faith is as great as ever. Hence, when persons are sick, it is their duty, before their strength and understanding fail them, to send for their minister or some elder of the church and to make known to him, with prudence, their spiritual state, or to consult him on the concerns of their immortal souls; and it is his duty to visit them and apply himself with all tenderness and love to minister to their spiritual good. But in view of the varying circumstances of the sick, the ordering of the whole service must be left to the discretion of the person who performs it. (D. W., Chap. XIII.)

403. *Of Days of Fasting and of Thanksgiving.*—There is no day under the gospel commanded to be kept holy except the Lord's day, which is the Christian Sabbath.

Nevertheless, to observe days of fasting and thanksgiving, as the dispensation of divine providence may direct, is both scriptural and rational.

Fasts and thanksgivings may be observed by individual Christians or families in private; by particular congregations; by a number of Christians contiguous to each other; by the congregations under the care of a Presbytery or of a Synod, or by all the congregations of our church.

It must be left to the judgment and discretion of every Christian and family to determine

when it is proper to observe a private fast or thanksgiving, and to the church Session to determine for particular congregations, and to the Presbyteries and Synods to determine for larger districts.

When it is deemed expedient that a fast or thanksgiving should be general, the call for them must be judged of by the General Assembly. And if at any time the civil power should think it proper to appoint a fast or thanksgiving, it is the duty of the ministers and people of our communion, as we live under a Christian government, to pay all due respect to the same.

Public notice is to be given a convenient time before the day of fasting or thanksgiving comes, that persons may so order their temporal affairs that they may properly attend to the duties thereof.

There should be public worship upon all such days; and let the prayers, psalms or hymns, portion of Scripture to be read, and sermons be all in a special manner adapted to the occasion.

On fast days let the minister point out the authority and providences calling to the observance thereof, and let him spend a more than usual portion of time in solemn prayer, particular confession of sin, especially of the sins of the day and place, with their aggravations, which have brought down the judgments of heaven; and let the whole day be spent in deep humiliation and mourning before God.

On days of thanksgiving he is to give the like information respecting the authority and providences which call for the observance of them, and to spend a more than usual part of the time in the giving of thanks agreeably to the occasion, and in singing psalms or hymns of praise.

It is the duty of the people on these days to rejoice with holy gladness of heart, but let trembling be so joined with their mirth that no excess or unbecoming levity be indulged. (D. W., Chap. XV.)

SABBATH DAY.

404. *It is the duty* of every person to remember the Lord's day and prepare for it before its approach. All worldly business should be so ordered and seasonably laid aside as that they may not be hindered thereby from sanctifying the Sabbath, as the Holy Scriptures require.

The whole day is to be kept holy to the Lord and to be employed in the public and private exercises of religion. Therefore it is requisite that there be a holy resting all that day from unnecessary labors and an abstaining from those recreations which may be lawful on other days; and also, as much as possible, from worldly thoughts and conversation.

Let the provisions for the support of the family on that day be so ordered that the servants or others be not improperly detained

from the public worship of God nor hindered from sanctifying the Sabbath.

Let every person and family in the morning, by secret and private prayer for themselves and others, especially for the assistance of God to their minister, and for a blessing upon his ministry, by reading the Scriptures, and by holy meditation, prepare for the communion of God in his public ordinances.

Let the people be careful to assemble at the appointed time, that, being all present at the beginning, they may unite with one heart in all the parts of public worship, and let none unnecessarily depart till after the blessing be pronounced.

Let the time after the solemn services of the sanctuary in public are over be spent in prayer, in devotional readings, and especially in the study of the Scriptures, meditation, catechising, religious conversation, the singing of psalms and hymns or spiritual songs, visiting the sick, relieving the poor, teaching the ignorant, and in performing such like duties of piety, charity and mercy. (D. W. 1.)

As it is the law of nature that, in general, a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God, so, in his word, by a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto him, which, from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week, and, from the resur-

rection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week, which in Scripture is called the Lord's day, and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath. (C. F., Chap. XXI., Sec. 7.)

This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreatins, but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship and in the duties of necessity and mercy. (C. F., Chap. XXI., Sec. 8.)

OF THE ASSEMBLING OF THE CONGREGATION, AND THEIR BEHAVIOR DURING DIVINE SERVICE.

405. When the time appointed for public worship is come, let the people enter the church, and, having taken their seats in a grave, decent and reverent manner, engage in silent prayer for a blessing upon themselves, the minister and all present, as well as upon others who are detained from the house of God.

In time of public worship, let all the people attend with gravity and reverence, forbearing to read anything except what the minister is then reading or citing, abstaining from all whisperings, from salutations of persons present or coming in, and from gazing about, sleeping, smiling, and all other improper behavior. It

is highly important that children should be with their parents, and that the members of a family should sit together in the house of God. (D. W., Chap. XI.)

FAMILY AND SECRET WORSHIP.

406. Besides the public worship in the congregations it is the indispensable duty of each person in secret, and of every family in private, to pray to and worship God.

Secret worship is most plainly enjoined by our Lord. In this duty every one, apart, is to spend sometime in prayer, reading the Scriptures, holy meditation, and serious self-examination.

The many advantages arising from a conscientious performance of these duties are best known to those who are found in the faithful discharge of them.

Family worship, which ought to be performed by every family ordinarily morning and evening, consists of prayer, reading the Scriptures and singing praises.

The head of the family who is to lead in this service ought to be careful that all the members of his family household duly attend, and that none withdraw themselves unnecessarily from any part of family worship, and that all refrain from their common business while the Scriptures are read, and gravely attend to the same no less than when prayer and praise is offered. (D. W., Chap. XVI.)

The Assembly advises that the scriptural

reading accompanying the Sabbath-school lessons be used at family worship. (1888.)

Let the heads of families be careful to instruct their children and servants in the principles of religion. Every proper opportunity ought to be embraced for such instruction. Therefore the paying of unnecessary visits on the Lord's day, admitting strangers into the family except when necessity or charity requires it, or any other practices, whatever plausible pretence may be offered in their favor, are to be highly disapproved of if they interfere with the above important and necessary duty. (D. W., Chap. XVI.)

CHAPTER VI.

Of Marriage and Burial of Dead.

MARRIAGE.

407. Marriage is a divine institution, though not a sacrament, nor peculiar to the church of Christ. It is proper that every Commonwealth, for the good of society, make laws to regulate marriage which all Christians are bound to obey. (D. W., Chap. XII., 1)

Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of man and wife, for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue and of the church with a holy seed, and for preventing uncleanness. (C. F., Chap. XVII.)

Marriage is between one woman and one man, neither is it lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband at the same time. (C. F , Chap. XXIV., 1.)

And they are not to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity prohibited by the word of God (D. W. xii.), nor can such incestuous marriages ever be made lawful by any law of man or consent of parties so as those persons may live together as man and wife. (C. F., Chap. XXIV., 4.)

It is lawful for all sorts of people to marry who are able, with judgment, to give their consent thereto; yet it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord. And therefore such as profess the true reformed religion should not marry with infidels, papists, or other idolaters; neither should such as are holy be unequally yoked by marrying with such as are notoriously wicked in their life or maintain damnable heresies. (C. F., Chap. XXIV.)

The parties ought to be of such years of discretion as to be capable of making their own choice; and if they be under age or live with their parents, the consent of the parents or others under whose care they are ought to be previously obtained and well certified to the minister before he proceeds to solemnize the marriage. (D. W., Chap. XII., 4.)

Parents ought neither to compel their children to marry contrary to their inclinations nor deny their consent without just and important reasons. (D. W., Chap. XII., 5.)

Marriage is of a public nature. The welfare of civil society, the happiness of families, and the credit of religion are deeply interested in it. Therefore the purpose of marriage ought to be sufficiently published a proper time previously to the solemnization of it. It is enjoined on all ministers to be careful that in this matter they neither transgress the laws of God nor the laws of the community; and that they may not destroy the peace and comfort of families, they must be properly certified with respect to the parties applying to them that no just objection lies against their marriage.

Marriage must always be performed before a competent number of witnesses, and it is recommended that it be not on the Lord's day. And the minister is to give a certificate of marriage when required.

Let the minister keep a proper register for the names of all persons whom he marries, and of the time of their marriage, for the perusal of all whom it may concern. (D. W., Chap. XII.)

408. Adultery or fornication committed after a contract, being detected before marriage, giveth just occasion to the innocent party to dissolve that contract.

In the case of adultery after marriage it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce, and after the divorce to marry another, as if the offending party were dead. (C. F., Chap. XXIV., 5.)

Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments unduly to put asun-

der those whom God hath joined together in marriage, yet nothing but adultery or such wilful desertion as can in no way be remedied by the church or civil magistrate is cause sufficient to dissolve the bond of matrimony, wherein a public and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed, and the persons concerned in it not left to their own wills and discretion in their own case. (C. F., Chap. XXIV., 6.)

MARRIAGE SERVICE.

409. Form recommended by the General Assembly, at the option of the minister, however.

Whether the marriage is in a church or at a private house, the parties shall present themselves, attended by witnesses, the man having the woman at his left hand before the minister, who shall say:

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

"If any here present can show just cause why these persons may not be lawfully joined together in marriage, let them speak now, or hereafter forever hold their peace.

"Marriage is a divine ordinance instituted for the promotion of man's happiness and the glory of God. The sacredness of the relation is revealed by the fact that the Holy Spirit has selected it as an apt emblem of the union existing between our Lord and his bride, the

church. Hence, beloved friends, take heed to the exhortation of the inspired apostle: 'Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord.' The happiness contemplated by this union is realized only by those who fully appreciate its sacredness and are faithful in the performance of the mutual obligations growing out of it and seek daily God's blessing.

"And now, as you enter into this new relation, consecrated by heaven's benediction and hallowed by all that is tenderest and truest in human affection, I entreat you both to join with me in the prayer that God may bless this union and sanctify it to the furtherance of your good and to the glory of his most holy name."

PRAYER.

"Most gracious God, fountain of life, love and joy, look with merciful favor upon these thy servants, now to be joined in holy wedlock, and enable them ever to remember and truly keep the vows which they make as they enter into covenant with one another and with thee, in accordance with thy holy word, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

THE COVENANT.

Here the parties join their right hands and the minister says:

Do you, —— ——, take —— ——, whom you now hold by the hand, to be your

lawful and wedded wife, and do you promise, in the presence of God and these witnesses, to be to her a faithful, loving and devoted husband so long as you both shall live?

The man answers: I do.

Do you, —— ——, take —— ——, whom you now hold by the hand, to be your lawful and wedded husband, and do you promise, in the presence of God and these witnesses, to be to him a faithful, loving, and obedient wife so long as you both shall live?

The woman answers: I do.

If a ring is given and received, the minister shall say:

Let this ring be the token of your plighted faith and the memorial of your mutual and unending love.

Then the minister, addressing himself to the company present, says:

Forasmuch as these persons have covenanted together in marriage, in accordance with the laws of the commonwealth, I do now pronounce them husband and wife after the ordinance of God. Whom, therefore, God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

PRAYER.

Almighty and ever blessed God, our heavenly Father, place the seal of thy loving approval upon the union of these two hearts and lives in the sacred bonds of matrimony. Enable thy

servants, by the gift of thy sufficient grace, to be faithful in keeping the vows they have now assumed. Whether in prosperity or adversity, sickness or in health, in sorrow or in joy, may their love and sympathy for each other never fail. Into thy holy keeping we now commit them, praying that they may ever live as being heirs together of the grace of life. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Then the married pair, kneeling or standing, the minister shall pronounce the benediction:

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favor look upon you, and so fill you with his grace that you may live faithfully together in this life, and in the world to come may have life everlasting.

Burial of the Dead.

410. The exercises appropriate for such an occasion are the singing of an appropriate psalm or hymn, the reading of some suitable portion or portions of Scripture, with such remarks as may seem proper to the minister to make, and prayer, in which the bereaved shall be especially remembered and God's grace sought on their behalf, that their afflictions may be blest to their everlasting good, and that they may be sustained and comforted in their sorrow.

These funeral services are to be left largely to the discretion of the minister performing

them, but he should always remember that the proper object of the service is the warning instruction or consolation of the living, and be careful to avoid abusing God's word by associating the hopes of the gospel with the close of an irreligious life. (D. W., Chap. XIV.)

A FUNERAL SERVICE.

Let the service begin with the reading of the whole or a part of the following selections of Scripture:

I am the resurrection and the life saith the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble; he cometh forth like a flower and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not.

For we are strangers before thee and sojourners as were all our fathers; our days on earth are as a shadow and there is none abiding.

We brought nothing into this world and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

PRAYER OR INVOCATION.

O God, who art our God and our fathers' God; thou whose compassions fail not, but who art the same yesterday, to-day and forever, grant us now thy presence, we beseech thee,

that our souls may be strengthened, and that we faint not under thine afflicting providences, but that, through thy condescension, we may find all grace to help in this our time of need, which we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, we will ascribe all honor, majesty and might, world without end. Amen.

HYMN.

Then let the whole or a part of the following Scripture selections be read:

Psalm xc.—Lord thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.

Thou turnest man to destruction and sayest return ye children of men.

For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

Thou carriest them away as with a flood: they are as asleep; in the morning they are like grass that groweth up; in the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth.

For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.

Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

For all our days are passed away in thy

wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told.

The days of our years are three score years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be four score years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we fly away.

Who knoweth the power of thine anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.

So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

[1 Cor. xv. 20–58 may also be read if desired.]

PRAYER. (See p. 230.)

BENEDICTION.

(For service at grave, see p. 232.)

CHILD'S FUNERAL.

The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble, the name of the God of Israel defend thee; send thee help from the sanctuary and strengthen thee out of Zion.

Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not.

The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

PRAYER. (See p. 226.)

HYMN.

Then read the following Scripture:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. . . . .

David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in and lay all night upon the earth.

And the elders of his house arose and went to him to raise him up from the earth; but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them.

And it came to pass on the seventh day that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead; for they said: Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?

But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead; therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead.

Then David arose from the earth and washed and anointed himself and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord and worshipped; then he came into his own house, and when he required, they set bread before him and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? Thou didst fast and weep for the child while it was alive; but when the child was dead thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive I fasted and wept; for I said: Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast; can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me. . . . .

I, even I, am he that comforteth you: As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arms and carry them in his bosom.

PRAYER.

O God, our heavenly Father, who, through the blood of thy Son, hast provided redemption for all thine own, we would render thee most hearty thanks in this our time of grief for the sure confidence we have that the soul of this dear child, whose loss we mourn, is at rest in thee. Not a sparrow falleth to the ground

without our Father, and those who are of more value than many sparrows cannot die until thou, who regardest with tender compassion the weakest of thy creatures, dost call them to thyself. We would not sorrow as those who have no hope, but bow in humble submission to thy sovereign decree, and by divine grace would say, Thy will be done. Vouchsafe unto thy servants, we beseech thee, the consolations of thy Spirit, giving us beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. May this chastisement, which now seemeth so grievous, yield in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness by drawing us into closest fellowship with thee, that we may not set our affections on the things of this world, but upon that blessed home above, where all who have departed in Christ await us beyond the reach of sorrow.

Shine upon our darkness, O Lord; pardon all our sins; build us up and strengthen us in our most holy faith, and at last give us the victory over death, bringing us in holiness and joy to thine own eternal rest.

Hear now our prayer, O God, and be pleased mercifully to bestow the blessings which we need, for the love of Jesus Christ, thy well-beloved son, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all dominion, glory and praise, world without end. Amen.

HYMN.

BENEDICTION.

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